the American Scholar

SPRING 1978 PRICE $2.00

In an Amber Mood
PAUL A. ZAHL

Bureaucracy Baiting
STEPHEN MILLER

Classical Historians and Their Audiences
ARNALDO MOMIGLIANO

J.G. Frazer Revisited
ROBERT ACKERMAN

Statistics in Prose
WILLIAM KRUSKAL

Afraid of Virginia Woolf?
SONYA RUDIKOFF

The Academic Ethos
EDWARD SHILS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE PERPETUAL DREAM

Reform and Experiment in the American College

Gerald Grant and David Riesman

The Perpetual Dream provides an overview of the diversity of undergraduate education in America. The authors explore a fundamental question: What ought to be the basis of intellectual and social community for undergraduates?

Cloth 488 pages $15.00 April

THE WORK ETHIC IN INDUSTRIAL AMERICA, 1850–1920

Daniel T. Rodgers

This provocative study of how values changed when older ideas of work collided with the industrial revolution draws examples from children's literature, political rhetoric, and feminist debates of the day.

Cloth 312 pages $15.00 March

THE DECLINING SIGNIFICANCE OF RACE

Blacks and Changing American Institutions

William Julius Wilson

An important overview of the complex interaction of class and race and the structural changes in the American economy which increasingly separate educated blacks from the impoverished black underclass.

"Wilson's analysis of the problem of the black lower class is one of the best I've seen. It is a good and valuable work in defining just where the problem is—and where it isn't."—Nathan Glazer

Cloth 216 pages $12.50 March

PROTESTANT AND ROMAN CATHOLIC ETHICS

Prospects for Rapprochement

James M. Gustafson

Gustafson explores the possibility of developing a truly ecumenical Christian ethics. He undertakes a cogent investigation of the philosophical and theological underpinnings of the two ethical doctrines to observe that revisionists in each tradition are moving toward a central area of reconciliation.

Cloth 208 pages $12.50 March

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

60637

CHICAGO

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Florence and the Medici

The Pattern of Control

By J.R. HALE. "Cool, shrewd, sympathetic, built on deep knowledge not just of its immediate subject but of European history and art. . . . The Medici, not a romantic lot in spite of all the gush, become really interesting when, as here, their story is set fully into that of a city and a society. . . . Telling detail; admirable book." —*The Guardian*

36 illustrations. $14.95

The Sea Peoples

Warriors of the Ancient Mediterranean

By N.K. SANDARS. Who were the mysterious Sea Peoples who roamed and battled along the coasts of the Mediterranean? Where did they come from and where did they vanish to? In this brilliant new study, Miss Sandars draws on the evidence of archaeology, the linear B tablets and Egyptian, Hittite, and Ugaritic documents to answer the questions surrounding the Sea Peoples and their role in the downfall of Late Bronze Age civilization. *138 illustrations, 8 in color.* $12.95

The Critical Writings of Adrian Stokes

Volume I: 1930-37 • Volume II: 1937-58 • Volume III: 1955-67

Edited by LAWRENCE GOWING. "As a writer on art and architecture, and incidentally as an autobiographer, a moralist, and a student of human nature, Stokes has a unique place in English life. . . . It could be argued that Adrian Stokes reinvented the language of art-writing." — JOHN RUSSELL. The three volumes of this edition make available Stokes's critical writings on the visual arts which have been unobtainable for many years. Volume I—*152 illustrations,* Volume II—*121 illustrations,* Volume III—*37 illustrations.* $24.95 per volume.

Thames and Hudson Inc.
500 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10036
Distributed by W.W. Norton & Company

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"... a major contribution to the intellectual history of the late nineteenth century."*

The Emergence of Professional Social Science

The American Social Science Association and the Nineteenth-Century Crisis of Authority

Thomas L. Haskell. "... an outstanding monograph. ... It is not only a history of the ASSA [examined from 1865 to 1909] and an interpretation of professional communities, it is also a venturesome reassessment of the intellectual 'revolution' that took place around the end of the nineteenth century and laid the foundations of modern social thought." — * John Higham, Johns Hopkins University. $12.00

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS PRESS
URBANA ILLINOIS 61801

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the American Scholar

Published for
General Circulation
by
PHI BETA KAPPA

EDITORIAL BOARD

JERVIS ANDERSON
SAUL BELLOW
JEREMY BERNSTEIN
PAUL FREUND
PETER GAY
CLIFFORD GEERTZ
OWEN GINGERICH
DIANA TRILLING
LILLIAN HELLMAN
ADA LOUISE HUXTABLE
CARL KAYSEN
MARTIN KILSON
HILTON KRAMER
ROBERT NISBET
EDWARD SHILS

JOSEPH EPSTEIN, *Editor*
ROBERT LUMIANSKY, *Consulting Editor*
RENÉ DUBOS, *Contributing Editor*
JEAN E. JONES, *Assistant Editor*
LISA McAULIFFE, *Poetry Editor*
MARY ELINORE SMITH, *Editorial Assistant*

DOROTHY KERR, *Director of Circulation and Promotion*
CARLEY STRAUGHAN, *Subscription Manager*
MARY MULLINIX

Advertising Representative: KERR & ASSOCIATES, 1211 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 604 Washington, D.C. 20036. Telephone: 202-296-1478.

Published quarterly since 1932 by the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa, 1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. Second-class postage paid at Washington, D.C. and at additional mailing offices. Copyright © 1978 by the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa.

Send all change of address notices, undeliverable copies, subscription orders and other mail to *Editorial and Circulation Offices:* 1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Subscription rates: $2.00 a copy, $8.00 one year, $14.00 two years, $20.00 three years, foreign and Canadian $.75 a year additional for postage.

Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by return postage. No responsibility is assumed for their loss or injury, or for the views expressed in articles published.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books from Ohio State

Joyce's Moraculous Sindbook

A Study of *Ulysses*

By Suzette A. Henke. Though most critics have been quick to acknowledge the innovative nature of James Joyce's stylistic experiments, few have pointed out the radical content of *Ulysses* or the revolutionary view of consciousness that is implicit in the novel. Professor Henke makes use of various Continental methods of literary criticism to reconstruct *Ulysses* as a fictional life-world, and draws upon phenomenology, Geneva criticism, psychoanalytic investigation, and linguistic analysis to illumine the progress of the narrative as the characters move from a world of solipsistic fear to one of shared experience, and from psychological enclosure to an existential liberation of consciousness. $15.00

Tornado Watch

By Gordon Grigsby. In this first published collection of his poetry, Grigsby offers an intensely personal volume that is of a poignancy surely contained. Written in the simplest of language, in which "familiar things . . . turn strange," the poems are divided into six untitled sections, each of which, at its own tempo, treats a variety of subjects in a diversity of moods, and serves to advance a total progression that, in its basic rhythms, parallels a growth of vision and increase in understanding. $9.00

Wilhelm von Humboldt

A Biography. Vol. I: 1767–1808

By Paul R. Sweet. The man whom Lord Acton called "the most central figure in Germany" of his time, but who himself asked of history only that he be remembered as "brother of the famous explorer," can be truly said to represent to Germans much of what Thomas Jefferson has come to mean to Americans. Notwithstanding his deference to his illustrious brother, the scientist Alexander, and history's obedient acceptance of his modest assessment of self, Wilhelm was a compelling and fascinating figure—an able statesman, accomplished man of letters, and scholar of distinction in a number of fields, who is wholly deserving of this full-length biography. $18.50

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS
2070 Neil Avenue, Columbus 43210

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONTENTS

The Despairing Optimist
René Dubos 152

Foodstuff and Nonsense
Aristides 157

The Academic Ethos
Edward Shils 165

The Historians of the Classical World and Their Audiences
Arnaldo Momigliano 193

Bureaucracy Baiting
Stephen Miller 205

Formulas, Numbers, Words: Statistics in Prose
William Kruskal 223

J. G. Frazer Revisited
Robert Ackerman 232

In an Amber Mood
Paul A. Zahl 237

POETRY

Conjuring
Robert Cording 190

Dürer Sketches His Mother in Charcoal
Norbert Krapf 191

The Escape Artist
M. L. Hester 230

divorcée
Gerald Locklin 231

The Punishment of Oedipus
Edward L. Burnett 236

When Someone Good Is Gone
Brad Reynolds 244

BOOKS

Afraid of Virginia Woolf?
Sonya Rudikoff 245

Reviews
Kenneth S. Lynn, Peter Gay, Donald Greene, John P. Sisk, William Haley 271

THE READER REPLIES 287

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cornell University Press

NEW FROM CORNELL...

The Late Middle Ages

Art and Architecture from 1350 to the Advent of the Renaissance

By WIM SWAAN. "Wim Swaan is an impeccable photographer, a lucid writer and a dedicated medievalist....He proposes that the period from 1350 to the Renaissance in Northern Europe and the Iberian peninsula produced a 'pyrotechnic blaze of glory' in art and architecture. The illustrations...make the point spectacularly." — *Time* magazine. "*The Late Middle Ages* is a treasure house." — JOHN CANADAY in *The New Republic*. *17 color plates, 330 black-and-white photographs.* $27.50

The Letters of Charles and Mary Anne Lamb

Volume III: 1809-1817

Edited by EDWIN W. MARRS, Jr. Rich in revelations about the extraordinary lives of the Lambs, these beautifully written letters are an inexhaustible store of information about the Romantic era and its major figures. "Charles Lamb's letters need no recommendation....Marrs' edition will contain more than 1150 letters when complete, including about 100 not previously published. Here, probably for a long time to come, is the standard edition of Lamb's finest work." — *Library Journal*. *5 black-and-white photographs.* $35.00

Volume I: 1796-1801/$25.00
Volume II: 1801-1809/$25.00

The Genre of "Troilus and Criseyde"

By MONICA E. McALPINE. Speculating on the nature of genres and on the nature of fictions in general, this book offers a new reading of *Troilus and Criseyde* that emphasizes Chaucer's indebtedness to Boethius and shows Chaucer as a working poet assimilating and reshaping his materials. $12.50

CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS ITHACA AND LONDON

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cornell University Press

By LANCE BANNING. This revisionary study offers a convincing new interpretation of Jeffersonian Republican thought in the 1790s. As Bernard Bailyn did for an earlier era, Professor Banning establishes the prevailing state of mind, and views events from that perspective. $15.00

The Jeffersonian Persuasion

Evolution of a Party Ideology

By ROBERT M. JOHNSTONE, Jr. This book focuses on the character of Jefferson's leadership—the dimensions of his task, the nature of his talents, the resources available to him and the ways in which he understood and used them. $15.00

Jefferson and the Presidency

Leadership in the Young Republic

By GEORGES DUBY. "[This book] belongs in the great French scholarly tradition initiated by Marc Bloch. Not only does this sensitive and complex analysis of economic and social life from the 7th through the 12th century introduce the reader to a sequence of fascinating problems, but also it allows him to come to appreciate the inner workings of Duby's mind." —*History: Review of the New Books.* (World Economic History series) $5.95 paper

The Early Growth of the European Economy

Warriors and Peasants from the Seventh to the Twelfth Century

By MERRITT ROE SMITH. *Winner of the 1977 Frederick Jackson Turner Award of the Organization of American Historians.* "Smith poses a formidable challenge to the traditional outlook in this provocative and important book, and the result is a model of scholarly and literary craftsmanship." — *Library Journal. 20 black-and-white illustrations.* $17.50

Harpers Ferry Armory and the New Technology

The Challenge of Change

CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS ITHACA AND LONDON

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Despairing Optimist

RENÉ DUBOS

One of the great achievements of Western civilization has certainly been the growth of individual freedom, especially in matters of religion, politics, and social behavior. On the other hand, life in modern societies now requires acceptance of a new kind of regimentation. We may be freer politically than our ancestors were but we are increasingly subject to rules determined by anonymous forces which are the expressions of economic and technological imperatives. The youth movements of the 1960s were largely directed against this new form of regimentation, which is the more resented because it is imposed by a society that most people find highly materialistic, technologically too complex, ecologically unsound, and so bureaucratic as to be completely impersonal.

The protest movements of the 1960s have failed to bring about significant social changes, and the would-be reformers of our times are unable to reach a consensus concerning the direction in which society should move to avoid further regimentation. It is apparently far easier to achieve political freedom than to escape from the complex networks of the modern industrial state.

Freedom has gained ground in international politics, as witnessed by the constant increase in the numbers of countries elected to membership in the United Nations because they have become sovereign states. Evidence of greater freedom can also be seen in the activities of diverse ethnic groups within any given nation-state. All over the world, provinces and regions try to recover their individuality by cultivating their folklore and their traditional ways of life, their literature, and their arts. Provinces and regions even try to recapture some degree of political independence by developing their special economic assets. Regionalism is thus emerging as a political force in nations that have long been highly centralized, such as France and Great Britain, and even in the Soviet Union. In the United States too, and still more in Canada, the various regions are affirming the characteristics that make them different from the rest of the nation—whether these characteristics derive from their geography, their history, or their ethnic composition. But while regionalism is asserting itself all over the globe, there is a countertrend toward standardization for the sake of technologic efficiency, and toward globalization in the belief that this will bring about better management of the world's resources and will help in the maintenance of peace. Thus we can observe a flowering of regional freedom that may yet be prevented altogether by the efforts currently made to establish an international order.

Three statements, respectively taken from the last three reports to the Club of Rome, will illustrate the attitude of those who believe that creation of a "World Order" is the urgent problem of our times:

- "No fundamental redressment of the world conditions and human prospects is possible except by worldwide cooperation in a global context."
- "Humanity is at the crossroads—[It] must bring about a new international order in which all peoples and nations can benefit from change. . . . It has just one future or no future at all."
- "The categorical imperative of our era is to strive towards the achievement of world solidarity."

Most people would agree that the present system of national sovereign states is obsolete and that we must search for a more sensible

RENÉ DUBOS is professor emeritus at the Rockefeller University. His newest book is *The Professor, the Institute, and DNA.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Important new books from

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS

THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION OF GERMANY—RETREAT TO VICTORY

By Edward N. Peterson. Here is a major history of the United States Army's occupation of Germany after World War II. In it Peterson traces every aspect of the occupation, from the development of policy at the top, in Washington and Berlin, to its implementation on the local level in the state of Bavaria and especially in four Bavarian communities. Peterson's conclusions describe what the United States can and cannot accomplish through the use of military power.

Edward N. Peterson, chairman of the Department of History, University of Wisconsin, River Falls, is the author of *The Limits of Hitler's Power* (Princeton, 1969). *Publication scheduled for May 1978; about 404 pages, $18.95*

THE GERMAN CHURCHES UNDER HITLER
Background, Struggle, Epilogue

By Ernst Christian Helmreich. In this monumental work, Ernst Christian Helmreich provides us with a volume that is likely to remain the standard study of church-state relations in Germany for many years to come. The period of the Church Struggle has never been studied before in such detail and within such a broad historical context.

Ernst Christian Helmreich is a distinguished scholar of German history and religion. Professor Emeritus at Bowdoin College, he is the author (with C. E. Black) of *Twentieth Century Europe: A History* (fourth edition, 1972). *Publication scheduled for June 1978; about 750 pages, about $27.50*

STALIN EMBATTLED, 1943-1948

By William O. McCagg, Jr. In a boldly pioneering study, William McCagg refutes many of the myths about Stalin perpetuated since the Cold War. His access to the archival work of Soviet and East European scholars, and the application of modern research methods to the study of Soviet domestic politics and foreign policy, lead to conclusions which upset the beliefs of most specialists about Stalin's actions in the period which shaped contemporary world politics.

William O. McCagg is director of the Russian and East European Program at Michigan State University. *Publication scheduled for May 1978; about 438 pages, $18.95*

TRADITION AND POLITICS
The Religious Parties of Israel

By Gary S. Schiff. "A pioneering study. . . . It is the first book in any language to give a full account of the religious parties of Israel."—*Congress Monthly.* "An excellent scholarly study . . . a valuable work.—*Library Journal.*

Gary S. Schiff is director of Middle East Affairs, National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council. *270 pages, $14.95*

CHINESE EXCLUSION VERSUS THE OPEN DOOR POLICY, 1900-1906
Clashes over China Policy in the Roosevelt Era

By Delber L. McKee. McKee introduces new material on domestic sources of policy making on China, including the pressure of U.S. labor interests on the formation of American foreign policy. *295 pages, $17.95*

order directly from

wayne STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS Detroit, Michigan 48202

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

international organization to cope with the increasing interdependency of economic and technological systems. It is certain also that much would be gained from greater technological standardization. But the trends toward globalization and standardization are not without their own dangers. In my judgment, too much organization may interfere with the continued progress of human societies and may even threaten the ecological health of the globe. Since my views concerning these problems have been largely shaped by my background in biology, I shall try to justify them by a few statements illustrating how *diversity* has been an essential factor in the evolution of life.

The evolutionary emergence of living forms reveals a continuous trend toward diversification. Biological diversity is the outcome of Darwinian adaptations resulting from mutations and natural selection. Most living species maintain their biological identity through mechanisms that prevent or at least minimize genetic crossing between species. Even though they may live in the same small pond, two species of frogs will remain different. Under natural conditions, furthermore, biological diversity is favored by the existence of innumerable and relatively independent ecosystems in which almost any organism can find a niche suited to its own particular needs and limitations.

Needless to say, the various types of living forms engage in an immense variety of associations from which they derive mutual benefits. Species and ecosystems can indirectly influence each other through the intricate web of subtle relationships that pervade the whole of creation. In practice, however, most forms of life retain a large degree of independence from most other forms. Rabbits probably ignore the turtles that feed on the same meadow and vice versa. The fate of lions in Africa has not been significantly affected by the extinction of the passenger pigeon in North America and has been affected very little by the introduction of European beef cattle on African farms. Contrary to a popular saying, it is not true that everything is related to everything else, at least in a crucial sense. Organisms and ecosystems tend to remain fairly isolated from each other unless human beings create artificial connections among them. Interdependence on a global basis is usually a consequence of human activities. Globalization may serve some purposes of interest to human beings, but it can also precipitate ecological disaster.

Just as diversity has constantly increased in biological systems under natural conditions, so has it also during most of human history. Human diversity emerged through Darwinian evolution resulting in racial differences, but its most important aspects have come from social evolution resulting in ethnic and cultural differences. Human life has been enriched in the past and will continue to be enriched in the future by biological and cultural evolutionary changes.

In ecological and cultural systems created by human activities, the inevitable consequence of standardization and globalization is to decrease the chance for variability and diversity, thereby interfering with the evolutionary process. Variability and diversity are thus the *sine qua non* of continued qualitative growth. Another objection to excessive interdependence of global systems is that it increases the possibility of a collective disaster in case any one of the subsystems fails to function properly. While it is true that the existence of many independent political and economic institutions is the cause of disorder and conflicts, it is also certain that plurality is the surest guarantee of social progress and ecological health.

Human cultures derive their diversity and richness from social evolutionary processes occurring more or less independently in different population groups. Although most of the world populations have long been in direct or indirect contact, they have remained largely independent of each other until our times. Even now, national and regional traits persist despite the ubiquitous influence of modern technology. Humankind is fundamentally the same everywhere but, within a given regional community, individual persons and natural systems exist in a relationship of mutualistic symbiosis creative of new ecological and cultural values.

Successful manifestations of regional diversity can be recognized in all aspects of human life and of nature all over the world, because there are many different ways of using the components of the earth in a manner compat-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ible with adaptive fitness. For example, a few species of trees and of other plants have served as raw materials for the creation of very different kinds of magnificent parks and gardens under the management of Italian, French, English, or Japanese landscape designers. In each particular case, the design of a given landscape is governed by an ethnic attitude implying a different way of relating to nature and to human beings. I have used the example of landscape design purely as a symbol of the ease with which natural structures and forces can be manipulated to create qualitative differences in human life and in the environment. Other illustrations could be found in literature and the plastic arts, in the cuisine and ways of dress, in folklore and festivals, and, perhaps most strikingly, in local architecture without architects.

Some of the most creative achievements of history emerged from situations in which the people of a particular area remained more or less isolated for an extended period of time and were thus compelled to discover and give expression to the local genius of the region. Following the breakdown of the Roman Empire, for example, Europe was divided into small feudal domains in which people developed original ways of using local resources and of converting these resources into artifacts and ways of life suitable to the region. The regional diversity of Europe is owing in part to the decentralization that prevailed after the end of Roman rule during the Middle Ages.

Regionalism was, of course, highly developed on the American continent among the original Indian populations and it persisted during the early phase of European occupation. The sense of the region, however, was naturally much weaker among the new immigrants, especially during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Unlike people who had acquired their cultural identity by evolving over long periods of time in a given region, the immigrants who became the new Americans derived their dominant cultural traits from the conscious choices they had made as to the way they wanted to live and the social institutions they wanted to find in America. Whether originating from an isolated Swedish farm or a crowded Polish ghetto, they longed for a democratic way of life in the land of unlimited opportunities. The immigrants had decided a priori to become "Americans" and this was more important in deciding their behavior than the region in which they happened to settle by chance, and often temporarily. As Talleyrand wrote in one of his letters during his several months' sojourn in the United States, "Tout homme qui choisit ici sa patrie n'est-il pas d'avance un Americain?" He had noticed that most Europeans who had elected to settle in the United States immediately adopted attitudes and ways of life that appeared to him those of a frontier civilization.

In his famous essay, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," first published in 1893, the historian Frederick Jackson Turner formulated the theory that the cultural traits of the American people and the characteristics of their institutions had been largely shaped by the experiences of the settlers as they moved from the Atlantic Coast to the Pacific Coast. Turner used the word frontier not in its usual sense of a limit of demarcation between geographical entities but rather to designate an ill-defined area, constantly changing, in which the ways of life of the pioneers, their economic practices, and their administrative structures were unsettled and rapidly evolving. Historians now doubt that the frontier experience, as defined by Turner, played as formative a role in the American psyche as he claimed; but it is certain that the American imagination has been deeply imbued with the frontier myth, and that geographic and social mobility, in particular, have been generally accepted as part of the American way of life.

Now that the continent is fully settled, regionalism seems to be gaining ground in the United States. Turner himself had anticipated that such a change would occur once the influence of the frontier experience had vanished. In his study, *The Significance of Sections in American History*, published in 1932, he had claimed that "national action will be forced to adjust itself to conflicting sectional interests." While this work dealt chiefly with the economic and political differences between the various regions (for which Turner used the word "sections"), there is no doubt that regional differences affect all aspects of life, from the most personal tastes to the most technological decisions.

The development of cultural regionalism is

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

likely to be accelerated by the fact that, as I pointed out in an earlier column, more and more people can now afford to select the region where they settle. Furthermore, many people are not only place seekers, but place makers, interested in the cultural potentialities of the place where they have elected to settle. Whereas many people long to relax on a Florida beach, others would rather saw firewood in New Hampshire. There is, furthermore, some likelihood that population mobility will decrease in the future, not because of economic difficulties, but because of changes in behavioral patterns. The eagerness for mobility may not last. It may be toned down by the belief that civilization does not depend on constant movement, and is indeed more likely to flourish when populations are anchored on the earth.

It is easy to understand how physical geography makes life in Florida or California different from life in Illinois and northern New England. But other reasons of a less obvious nature are also likely to broaden the range of regional differences in the near future.

The trend toward technological homogenization has been due in large part to the ease with which petroleum products and natural gas can be shipped from one part of the world to another, thus making energy readily available anywhere for all kinds of industries. Fossil fuels, however, will probably soon come to be more scarce and more costly. It is therefore probable that efforts will be made to derive energy from other sources that are renewable and not polluting—such as solar radiation, the wind, the biomass, the tides and waves, et cetera. All these possible sources of renewable energy are highly localized, a fact that will probably bring about changes in the geographic distribution of various industries. Just as the shift from hydroelectric power to coal and then to petroleum and natural gas made heavy industries move from New England to the Appalachian area and later to Texas, so one can anticipate that the development of new sources of energy will bring about the emergence of new industrial centers, for example in the Southwest if solar radiation can be harnessed economically in reflectors, or in the Southeast and Northwest if the biomass comes to be used on a large scale.

Another factor that has made for homogenization is the tendency to concentrate the various types of agriculture and animal husbandry in specialized parts of the world. This trend, however, may not be irreversible. Complete dependence on external sources of food is fraught with dangers even in the United States. Some people in the northeastern states, for example, are beginning to fear that California, Texas, and other food-producing states may become so heavily populated that they will consume most of the food they produce and have little to export. Furthermore, shipment of certain kinds of food over long distances may eventually become prohibitively expensive because of energy costs, and undependable because of labor difficulties. These prospects point to the possibility that, at some time in the future, it will become desirable once more to produce the kinds of crops and livestock best adapted to regions where agriculture has been all but abandoned. There is evidence, in fact, that a partial degree of independence with regard to food production is being considered a matter of national security in many parts of the world.

The retreat from excessive interdependence may be accelerated by the general feeling that the human mind cannot cope with the problems of management when the social, economic, and technologic problems are on a global scale. Other difficulties, mentioned earlier, are that global systems are vulnerable to failure or sabotage affecting any component of the megasystem and that globalization will almost inevitably interfere with social innovations. In contrast, both safety and creativity will be favored by the existence of multiple small ecological and cultural systems, aware and tolerant of each other, but jealous of their autonomy.

Skepticism concerning the value of globalization does not necessarily imply isolationism. Rather it fosters the hope that we can create a world order in which natural regions will recapture their identity by cultivating their *genius loci*, yet interplay symbiotically in a creative way. The most promising goal for humankind may not be the organization of an overpowering political unit but rather the achievement of unity from diversity—a process similar to the one through which the mechanisms of biological evolution have generated the wonderful richness of life.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Life and Letters

Foodstuff and Nonsense

ARISTIDES

Can too great a fuss be made about food? Fifteen, even ten years ago I should have said that any fuss about food was too great, but I grow older and food has become more important to me. As with all solipsists of literary proclivity, this observation about myself did not take long to bloom into an aphorism about humankind generally. "Food," I announced, first to myself, then to friends, "is the sex of the middle-aged." One friend had the discourtesy to rejoin, "On the contrary. I should have thought sex was the food of the middle-aged." Since a statement and its reverse cannot both be true, my aphorism is in a bit of difficulty. Yet as a character in Cyril Connolly's story "Shade Those Laurels" puts it: "They say that food is a substitute for love. Well, it's certainly a bloody good one."

The marriage of the subjects of food and sex is one of long standing, and I should like herein, if I can, to put them asunder. Others wish to keep them married. No one who has seen the film *Tom Jones* can altogether forget that succulent feast in which food was made a form of foreplay to sex itself. Commonplace it is to suggest that food is often a substitute for sex—and wrong as well as commonplace when one considers the great numbers of people passionately devoted to both. But so regularly are the subjects of food and sex conjoined that it is small wonder that eating has not (not yet, thank God) found its Masters and Johnson. One can see their laboratory now—a gleaming stainless steel kitchen, perhaps, or a clinical row of banquettes—with human guinea pigs, their taste buds wired, bosoms covered with large napkins, masticating away, while in the background cameras hum and electronic machinery clicks out a record of the activity of the salivary glands in their encounter with poached salmon or cassoulet.

Not that the confusion between food and sex is so very difficult to understand. Samuel Butler in his *Notebooks* wrote on eating and all the senses: "They [the senses] are all a kind of eating. They are all touch, and eating is touch carried to the bitter end." (Yet Butler, it is good to report, also jotted in his *Notebooks*, "The only things I should greatly care about if I had more money are a few more country outings and a little more varied and better cooked food; nicer things and more expensive things to eat and drink.") Transient pleasures both, the appetites for food and sex are in varying degrees in us all, but, as K. C. Chang, the editor of a recent volume entitled *Food in Chinese Culture*, argues: "These two activities are quite different. We are, I believe, much closer to our animal base in our sexual endeavors than in our eating habits. Too, the range of variations is infinitely wider in food than in sex."

One has to agree with Professor Chang that food has it over sex for variety. Hedonistically, gustatory possibilities are much broader than copulatory ones. Literarily, reading about food is more interesting than reading about sex. The authors of *The Physiology of Taste* and of *Histoire d'O*, for example, are writers equally obsessed, but how charming is Brillat-Savarin's obsession, how sickening Réage's! Similarly, how delightful it is to hear someone describe a magnificent meal, or comical to hear a botched one described, whereas listening to the same person describe a seduction is almost invariably boring, if not repulsive. Perhaps the reason for this is that eating is the more social function, sex the more personal, and as such eating shows people in a greater multiplicity of poses, moods, and characters than does sex. Modern psychologists to the contrary, there is more going on at table than in bed.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Food is essential to life, as the old Erpi Classroom Films used to say, but, beyond its role in subsistence, is eating among life's important activities? In Rose Macaulay's lovely anthology of quotations, *The Minor Pleasures of Life*, although seven pages are given over to the category "Snacks Between Meals" and two to "Taverns," eating as a category has no place in the book. From that I draw the conclusion, with which I wholly agree, that eating is among, not the minor, but the major pleasures of life. This is a view shared by Marguerite Yourcenar's Hadrian, in her novel *Memoirs of Hadrian*. After speaking of his repugnance at the prospect of attending yet another banquet in Rome, he remarks:

> Do not do me the injustice to take me for a mere ascetic; an operation which is performed two or three times a day, and the purpose of which is to sustain life, surely merits all our care. To eat a fruit is to welcome into oneself a fair living object, which is alien to us but is nourished and protected like us by the earth; it is to consume a sacrifice wherein we sustain ourselves at the expense of things. I have never bitten into a chunk of army bread without marveling that this coarse and heavy concoction can transform itself into blood and warmth, and perhaps into courage. Alas, why does my mind, even in its best days, never possess but a particle of the assimilative powers of the body?

As for how important eating is, right now I should say that—judging from the space given to it in the media, the great number of cookbooks and restaurant guides published annually, the conversation of friends—it is very nearly topic number one. Restaurants today are talked about with the kind of excitement that ten years ago was expended on movies. Kitchen technology—blenders, grinders, vegetable steamers, microwave ovens, and the rest—arouses something akin to the interest once reserved for cars. In the Bay Area of California, a popular course is taught in something called "Kitchen Consciousness." The journalist Sara Davidson, in a book entitled *Loose Change*, speaks of one of the early years of her marriage in New York as being the year of "competitive cooking." In the Middle West, a magazine called *Chicago* is a whomping commercial success almost solely because of its rather cheerily optimistic reports on new restaurants. The time may be exactly right to hit the best-seller lists ler who disposes of his victims in a Cuisinart.

An intense interest in food, the products of sky, sea, and soil, is scarcely new. In China during the Chou civilization (circa 1100 to 200 B.C) cookbooks listed twenty different methods of cooking: "boiling, steaming, roasting, red-cooking, clear-simmering, pot-stewing, stir-frying, deep-frying, shallow-frying, meeting, splashing, plunging, rinsing, cold-mixing, sizzling, salting, pickling, steeping, drying, smoking." (I quote from *Food in Chinese Culture.*) Among the Greeks, Archestratus, a contemporary of Aristotle, composed a gastronomical Baedeker of the ancient world. The Romans were of course notorious for their ingenuity in assembling luxurious table fare, and Pliny the Elder, in his *Natural History*, tells of the dish of "Clodius Aesopus, the tragic actor, which was valued at one hundred thousand sesterces, and in which were served nothing but birds that had been remarkable for their song or their imitation of the human voice, and purchased, each of them, at the price of six thousand sesterces; he being induced to this folly by no other pleasure than that in these he might eat the closest imitators of man; never for a moment reflecting that his own immense fortune had been acquired by the advantages of his own voice."

About the French fix on food little new can be added, although it is impossible to resist the temptation to repeat the remark supposed to have been uttered at table by Brillat-Savarin's sister Pierrette, then two months shy of her hundredth birthday: "*Vite, apportez-moi le dessert—je sens que je vais passer!*" Brillat-Savarin (1755–1826), advocate and gastronome—famous for his dictum: "Animals feed; man eats. Only the superior man knows how to eat"—is said to have left life like a guest departing happily from a good dinner, the best possible advertisement for a man who lived for his stomach.

In colonial America, in the South, there was a cult of turtle and terrapin, and Virginia was noted for a dish called "preserve of fowle," a Chinese box of a culinary creation that consisted of a dove inserted into a partridge, the partridge into a guinea hen, the guinea hen into a duck, the duck into a capon, the capon into a goose, and the goose into a peacock or turkey, and the entire ex-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

travaganza cut for serving into transverse sections. In late nineteenth-century America, a time when Society was dominated by a generation of *arriviste* capitalists, food provided a fertile field for ostentation. Most notorious in this line were Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish's dinners for dogs and her infamous monkey dinner, at which a pet monkey was seated at the table and introduced as a Corsican prince. More traditional high flyers turned out at such New York shrines of degustation as Rector's, Sherry's, and Delmonico's. The Seelys, the Hydes, the Bradley-Martins gave parties at which as many as three separate meals were served; the Bradley-Martin ball was said to have cost $369,200.

Such activities have found their just chronicler in the late Lucius Beebe, himself a very great snob with a taste for all of life's extravagances, including hyperbolic prose. In Beebe's account, in *The Big Spenders,* at these dinner parties there were always "mountains of caviar" and "Niagaras of champagne." He tells the story of James Gordon Bennett, heir to the old *New York Herald,* who one afternoon was unable to get his regular table at his favorite restaurant in Monte Carlo. To expedite matters he simply bought the place (reportedly for $40,000), removed the customers from his accustomed table, finished his lunch of mutton chops, and presented the waiter with the deed to the restaurant as a tip. A fine story is told about Beebe himself. One of his lady friends once informed another that Beebe was soon to go into the hospital for exploratory surgery. "Well," the other is said to have replied, "I do hope the doctors have the good grace to open Lucius at room temperature."

Snobbery is of course the fly in the soup of gastronomy. Often it has its natural antidote in the jolt back into quotidian reality, as in the joke about the two ultra-refined ladies dining in a greasy-spoon restaurant, one of whom asked to see the sommelier and was told by the waiter, "Lady, if it's not on the menu, we ain't got it." The snobbery of a Lucius Beebe is somehow defensible in its gaudiness and comedy. But a new snobbery is now on the march. As cookery was once the province of the peasant and servant class, and gourmandising that of the aristocracy and upper bourgeoisie, so now both the preparing and eating of artfully cooked food have come to be taken up by the middle classes in America—and in a big way. As a result, eating, once and still a pleasure, is fraught with a certain element of anxiousness. Expertise in preparing food and the art of eating it knowledgeably are now great status symbols in the United States. Food has become a way of separating *cognoscenti* from barbarians. By their palates shall ye know them. It's enough to give everyone a nervous stomach.

Where there is so much anxiety, snobbery commands the field—and snobbery of a kind that is not redeemed by either grandeur or good humor. An example of this snobbery at its worst can be found, at novel length, in Mary McCarthy's *Birds of America.* Published in 1971, Miss McCarthy's novel is egregiously wrong in its sociology, as befits a novelist who writes about America from a desk in Paris. Precisely at the time when hostesses began to suffer nervous breakdowns over whether to serve Bibb lettuce or romaine, when one most risked being impaled on a fondue fork at the homes of friends, when Hammacher Schlemmer sold vest-pocket pepper mills, Miss McCarthy wrote a novel whose gravamen is that Americans do not care about food. "You don't get the picture, Mother," one of the characters in *Birds of America* announces. "You're out of touch. Americans have stopped cooking." Culinary grievance is piled upon gastronomic horror in the novel's pages: no bean pots in the stores; no jelly glasses either; no fish not already filleted; no plain yogurt, just flavors; no pastry flour; no salted codfish, only frozen codfish in cakes; only instant tapioca. In one scene in the novel we are led to the conclusion that even jailhouse food is not what it once was: the hamburgers—*horrible dictu!*—have ketchup on them. The way one can tell the villains in *Birds of America* is that they eat poorly: not vile stews and filthy hashes, but canned hams and instant mixes. They also rely on electrical appliances. (Interestingly, Elizabeth David, the excellent English food writer, has recently said that the best possible bread box is the freezer.) A heavy political seasoning went into the making of *Birds of America,* and part of the justification for its concern with foodstuffs is to make the dubious point that people who do not care about the natural in food, such as Americans, soon find themselves committing unnatural acts of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

aggression, such as Vietnam. Miss McCarthy's message, then, appears to be, "Make soup—not war!"

Snobbery about food on the Left is no less common than on the Right, although a bit more unseemly. In the 1930s a now forgotten minor writer who was a member of the American Communist Party and who used to lunch regularly at the Waldorf, when apprised of what looked to be a contradiction between his public politics and his private tastes, shrugged and replied: "Nonsense! Nothing's too good for us Reds." Not that one has to be political at all to be snobbish about food. These days snobbery appears to be, at least in my experience, rampant among academics and intellectuals—always assuming that being a snob about food does not preclude being at the same time quite unintelligent about it. Perhaps this stems from the fact that food, though it can be expensive enough, is still within the financial grasp of most of us and is the one affordable means of imitating the upper classes available to those whose purses are otherwise shorter than their pretensions. Of bleak memories in this connection I recall a lunch with a publisher's editor who made an extravagant fuss in a French restaurant about the cheese having been left too long in the refrigerator; another lunch with a former principal editor of *Newsweek* who very nearly prostrated himself to gain the attentions of the maître d' in another French restaurant; and a third in which a journalist, demonstrating his multilingualism, several times cried out, "*Henri, encore vodka!*" No doubt about it, French restaurants in America do not bring out the best in people.

The problem with snobbery over food is that, along with being generally unpleasant, it stands in the way of enjoyment and beclouds what is already a sufficiently mysterious subject. The preparation of food, its presentation, its price, the surroundings in which it is eaten, the company with whom one eats it—all are the most subtle, almost mystical, matters. In an essay entitled "Food," Harold Nicolson tells about lunch at the home of an inordinately wealthy and greedy man who served his guests a soup made in a heavy silver cauldron and composed of the following items: the very largest black truffles, scarlet pepper heads from Thessaly, cucumbers from the Ukraine, spices from Bali and Sumatra, locarto beans from Marrakesh, the roots of a palmetto bush, olives from Ithaca, flakes from the flesh of a giant lobster, and, poured simultaneously into the broth, one bottle of Veuve Cliquot and one bottle of Amontillado. The effect of the whole, as Nicolson describes it, was "like some very hot cough-mixture drunk with shrimp paste." Thus the first paradox about food: the whole can be so much less than the sum of its parts; and, its converse in other instances, so much more.

Or consider the presentation of food. G. C. Lichtenberg, the eighteenth-century German physicist and aphorist, wrote: "Coffee drunk out of wine glasses is really miserable stuff, as is meat cut at the table with a pair of scissors. Worst of all, as I once actually saw, is butter spread on a piece of bread with an old though very clean razor." Why is the prospect of cutting one's steak with scissors nearly enough to turn one to vegetarianism? How is it that one host can make a minor work of art of a bacon-lettuce-tomato sandwich, while another can make prime ribs of beef remind one of nothing quite so much as that bloody afternoon at the Little Big Horn?

As with the presentation of food, so with portions. Chinese parents used to instruct their children that it is best to leave the table when 70 percent full; and I must say I commend the wisdom that has gone into deriving that very precise figure, even though I am unable to live up to it. A. J. Liebling, of late lamented memory, once defined a gourmand as someone who likes not only delicacies but plenty of them. Nevertheless there are limits. I shall not soon forget a lugubrious meal shared with a married couple in which a whole chicken was plopped upon each of our plates. Too much of a good thing—better, I suppose, than too much of a bad thing, but still too much. Or consider price. My favorite Mandarin restaurant recently moved from its location in a working-class neighborhood to one in the most expensive area of the city, with a consequent doubling of prices. The chef is the same, the food looks the same, but it no longer tastes so good to me. Cheapness on my part? I do not think so.

It nearly goes without saying that bad company can destroy a meal—as can, in a restaurant, a bad-tempered waiter. Yet am I alone in preferring, when the meal before me is

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

magnificent, that the company not be too scintillating, but instead comfortable, even somewhat old shoe? As Lyndon Johnson said in derogation of Gerald Ford that he could not chew gum and walk at the same time, so neither can I at the same time give myself over to splendid vittles and wonderful talk. I can simultaneously read a book and watch television, type and talk over the telephone, but to take in two heightened pleasures at once—those of excellent food and fine talk—is something I cannot do well. My tendency is to be swept up by the talk, and either to swallow my food without savoring it or let it grow cold on the plate. Too-brilliant talk does not allow for chewing in the deep silence of reverence. Apparently what I need is a sign, of the kind put up during street or sewer repairs, to set alongside my plate: MAN EATING.

As for settings, both physical and human, M. F. K. Fisher has covered this point admirably:

> . . . gastronomical perfection can be reached in these combinations: one person dining alone, usually upon a couch or a hillside; two people, of no matter what sex or age, dining in a good restaurant; six people, of no matter what sex or age, dining in a good home. . . .
>
> The six should be capable of decent social behavior: that is, no two of them should be so much *in love as to bore the others, nor at the opposite extreme* should they be carrying on any sexual or professional feud which could put poison on the plates all must eat from. A good combination would be one married couple, for warm composure; one less firmly established, to add a note of investigation to the talk; and two strangers of either sex, upon whom the better-acquainted could sharpen their questioning wits. . . .
>
> Hunger and fair-to-good health are basic requirements, for no man stayed by a heavy midafternoon snack or gnawed by a gastric ulcer can add much to the general well-being.

I have thought a bit about a number of people whom I should have either liked or decidedly not have liked to have eaten with. I should like to have eaten with Robin Hood and the men of Sherwood Forest, or at least in the film version of *Robin Hood* in which one of the merry men cries out, "To the tables, everybody, and stuff yourselves!" I should have very much liked to dine with Talleyrand, who was a great gastronome and who, being a clever politician besides, would have been able to warn me, during dinner, of any revolution that might be forthcoming. A Saturday night dinner with the Brothers Goncourt would have been to my taste, especially on an evening when Sainte-Beuve appeared, for his gossip would provide a delicious dessert. I should have appreciated an invitation to the banquet in honor of the *douanier* Rousseau, the event at the center of Roger Shattuck's *The Banquet Years*. Breakfast would have been best with George Sand, who, after a night scribbling away at her desk, at table slept through the morning meal. Certainly it would be preferable to breakfasting with the marathon runner Frank Shorter, whose morning meal on the day of a race includes a plate of pancakes (with heavy syrup), a plate of spaghetti and meat sauce, half a dozen chocolate bars, a couple of sandwiches, and three or four soft drinks. H. L. Mencken I should have preferred to dine with in a restaurant, for he cared immensely for good food, knew where it was served, and called a fine restaurant "one of the greatest of all human enterprises, one of the most socially useful things." Lunch with Hemingway, who wrote so wonderfully well about food, might be nice, but—"Sorry to have to eat and run, Hem"—I should want to be off before he suggested that we go over to the gym for a little workout in the ring.

Of great personages with whom I should not have cared to dine, first among them would be Augustus, especially if his wife Livia had anything to do with the preparation of the meal. The fare at the table of Julian the Apostate, noted for his asceticism—he lived austerely, said his panegyrist Mamertinus, to make life delightful for others—sounds too humble even for a plebeian like me. Dinner with the older Tolstoy sounds like no treat either, particularly during the days when he struggled to hold to his vegetarian regimen; the thought of the great old man grimacing over his gruel while bickering with the long-suffering Countess Tolstoy is enough to kill off the most exuberant appetite. Although a letting up of table manners would certainly be possible, at least according to Milovan Djilas's account, I think I should pass up an invitation to dinner with Stalin. A man I should have adored to eat with anywhere but at his own home, Lamb House, was Henry James. He was a famous diner-out and ap-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

preciator of solid fare, but James's own table, as Edith Wharton has recounted, offered lean pickings. "If anyone in a pecuniary difficulty appealed to James for help," Mrs. Wharton noted, "he gave it without counting; but in daily life he was haunted by the spectre of impoverishment, and the dreary pudding or pie of which a quarter or half had been consumed at dinner reappeared on the table the next day with its ravages unrepaired."

While on the subject of those with whom I should not care to dine, I ought to add that I am made extremely edgy when informed that my host or hostess is a "gourmet" cook. Whenever I hear the word "gourmet," in fact, I reach for my Alka-Seltzer. The word invokes all that is most dangerous and pretentious in food: fondues guaranteed to turn one purple as *aubergine*, crepes suitable for covering infields during rain delays, Grand Marnier soufflés that sink, first in the dish and then in one's stomach, like the *Andrea Doria*. Nor shall I forget the day a professor of my acquaintance brought to my door—gourmet food to go—a large plastic container of bouillabaisse she had whipped up, which had the dark look of prehistoric ooze (I thought I detected something in it move) and for which I thanked her profusely before consigning it, without prayer, to the incinerator.

One observation on vulgarity of taste that has always impressed me is that the only form of vulgarity that truly matters is that which causes people to reject possibly rewarding experiences. The spirit of adventure is part of the gastronomic personality. I myself only discovered oysters in my thirties, an event I liken to Bertrand Russell's discovery of sex at around the same age, for the result was roughly similar: neither of us could ever afterward get enough. Still, there are experiences and there are experiences, and, in the gastronomic line, many are worth avoiding. From the gaunt and pallid faces of the habitués of health-food shops I take my clue to steer clear of a concentrated diet of natural or organic foods. Moreover, while it is theoretically possible to enjoy the whole world on one's fork, not all ethnic foods hold equal allure. (Has anyone in California yet opened a quaint little Symbionese restaurant?) Nor do menus planned on the evolutionary scale have much appeal—beginning, say, with snails (things that crawl the earth), going on to fish (things of the sea), thence to fowl (things of the air), and ending perhaps with a small child of very high I.Q.

Food is too various to formulate dogmas about, but nevertheless the one thing that can spoil a meal, or even discussion of a meal, is the thick sauce of pretentious language. Discussion of food requires the light yet philosophical touch, recognition that it is serious and yet comical, reflecting as it does something of—if one will allow this parboiled potato of a phrase—the human condition. For those who care about it, food represents happiness on a plate, palpably there, even renewable with the onset of fresh hunger, yet like most human happiness all too transient. It requires a certain worldly wisdom, a point of view, to get all this in proper perspective.

The best American writer about food in our day, in my view, was A. J. Liebling. As far as I know, Liebling did not himself cook; nor did he offer any advice about the fabrication of meals. But if he couldn't dish it out, he sure could take it. Photographs of Liebling on the dust jackets of his books show a man resembling an even more overweight King Farouk, but from within the flesh a very intelligent face shines out. A practician of the table, Liebling wrote solely about the enjoyment of food. "The primary requisite for writing about food," he noted, "is a good appetite." But the primary criterion for judging good writing about food, I should say, is that reading such writing makes you hungry. This Liebling unfailingly did.

In his writing Liebling occasionally made reference to "the clear-headed voracious man," obviously a thinly veiled autobiographical reference. The only time his own clear head ever failed him, in my opinion, was in writing about wines, when he would sometimes fall into the well-worn trap of preciosity: "a refined but effective understatement of younger champagnes, which run too much to rhetoric, at best." But he could be counted upon to redeem himself with his old common sense: "If a wine isn't good it doesn't 'go' with anything, and if it is it can go in any company." His pages are filled with useful tips, all of which, in my experience, turn out to be accurate. Fifty seats is the maximum for a good restaurant is one such tip; the Armenians, Greeks, and Turks do best with rice is another. Often he will pass on tips

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that others gave him, such as that any restaurant where you see priests eating with priests, or sporting girls with sporting girls, is bound to be good. Liebling was a man who could refer to the menu of a fine restaurant as "a prospectus for bliss."

A. J. Liebling distrusted abstemiousness. "Hitler," he wrote, "was the archetype of the abstemious man. When the other krauts saw him drink water in the Beer Hall they should have known he was not to be trusted." He looked back to the day when "to be thin at thirty was a handicap in the world of affairs." He preferred the time when doctors "recognized that their role was to facilitate gluttony, not discourage it." His own favorite bedside book was the *Guide du Gourmand à Paris* (1925 edition). Only once did he attempt to lose weight, by checking in to a Swiss dieting clinic—an effort that was fated to fail and that he described as an event unique in his life: "the only time I yielded to the temptation to give myself pain."

A. J. Liebling died in 1963, at the age of fifty-nine, doubtless earlier than he had to; doubtless, too, any coroner would have found that the weapon that brought about his death was the fork. Fat man that he was, his life poses the issue of vanity versus the pursuit of pleasure, or at any rate pleasure harmful only to oneself. (Unlike the lecher, the glutton does not need to bring anyone down with him.) More important, his life puts the question whether it is better to live less long but as well as possible, or as long as possible but less well. It is a question, I hasten to add, to which I, for one, never expect to find the answer. Although I regret A. J. Liebling's death more than that of any other journalist who wrote in my lifetime, perhaps it is better that he did not live to learn about cholesterol, carbohydrates, and Dr. Atkins.

One of the crowning ironies of our day is that, just as the interest in food has risen, so has the interest in diet. (Last December, cover stories for the same weekly issues of *Newsweek* and *Time* were, respectively, "Diet Crazes" and "The Cooking Craze.") That anti-gastronomic word "diet" has put guilt on all our plates, spittle in the fount of one of the greatest human pleasures. Worse news: As we grow older, our physicians tell us, we must eat less food and that more carefully, for if cholesterol or excessive carbohydrates don't get us our plumbing will. "Do I dare to eat a peach?" J. Alfred Prufrock asked. Yes, and a wafer of Ry Krisp, but not much more. Is there a lesson to be learned in any of this? If so, it comes from paraphrasing another poet: "Gather ye cutlets while ye may. . . ."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN SEARCH OF BUDDY BOLDEN
First Man of Jazz

DONALD M. MARQUIS. The beginnings of jazz and the legend of cornetist Buddy Bolden are inextricably entwined. Don Marquis has interviewed individuals who knew the jazzman and, in addition to finding a previously unknown portrait of Bolden, has used primary sources to overlay the myth with the substance of reality. The result is as complete a biography as is ever likely to be written on the first "King" of New Orleans jazz.

Illustrated, $9.95

MEDIA-MADE DIXIE
The South in the American Imagination

JACK TEMPLE KIRBY. Br'er Rabbit and Scarlett O'Hara are among Kirby's cast of thousands in a broad and fascinating survey of southern post-1900 popular culture. "Kirby tells his story well, if impressionistically and with few intellectual pretensions; he thus successfully illuminates . . . the interplay of ideas and mass culture in America."—*Kirkus*

Illustrated, $9.95

PASSAGE THROUGH GEHENNA

MADISON JONES. A new novel by the writer whose southern themes, according to *Saturday Review*, "transcend their region and embody universal truths." Set in the hills of Tennessee, Jones's Dostoevskian tale hovers at the edge of the supernatural.

$8.95

THIS GROTESQUE ESSENCE
Plays from the American Minstrel Stage

GARY D. ENGLE. Before the development of the movies the most popular form of entertainment in America was the minstrel show, whose afterpiece was a finale that brought out the whole troupe in a combination of song, dance, and slapstick. In looking at twenty-two afterpieces which date from the 1830s to the 1880s, Engle provides insight into the tastes and values of the idealized American Common Man in the nineteenth century.

$14.95

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS Baton Rouge 70803

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Academic Ethos

EDWARD SHILS

In the late 1960s, when disorder in the universities was at its height, Lord Ashby suggested that university teachers should work out and subscribe to a code to guide their conduct. He thought of it as an academic equivalent of the Hippocratic oath, which would guide the teacher in his relationship to his students. Efforts by specialized learned societies in the social sciences have recently been made to draw up codes of ethics; these deal mainly with the ethical problems raised by certain techniques of social inquiry and its financial support. The University of California has on several occasions considered a code of rules to govern the selection of research projects in the social sciences in accordance with their anticipated social consequences. It has also considered the regulation of its members when they serve as consultants to bodies outside the university. The United States government has laid down rules regulating the conduct of scientific investigations of human beings.

Lord Ashby was right; there is no Hippocratic oath for the academic profession. Aside from a few fragmentary starts, which are responses to particular abuses and grievances, the academic profession has done very little to promulgate a set of rules or general principles to govern its conduct in teaching and research. Such rules should apply to the internal conduct of the university in each of the main fields in which it engages in the acquisition and transmission of advanced knowledge. They should also apply to the publishing and political activities and the performance of advisory services for government.

Since Lord Ashby wrote, the task has become no less urgent and no easier. The rapid expansion of student bodies and teaching staffs, the creation of so many new universities, the disorder in many universities, the large sums of money available for research, and the numerous external demands, distractions, and opportunities have placed a great strain on the academic profession. There is a need for the profession to remind itself of the fundamentals of its undertaking.

These are many-sided. Lord Ashby was interested primarily in the university teacher as a teacher. The university teacher is, however, not

EDWARD SHILS is professor of sociology and social thought at the University of Chicago and a fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge. He is the editor of *Minerva: A Review of Science, Learning, and Policy*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

solely a teacher. Teaching is only part of the activity of one who is appointed to teach in a modern university or college. Many teachers also do much research; many more do a little research; and still more read the research of others and incorporate its results into their teaching. A teacher is a member of an academic institution which is more than an administrative facility for his teaching and research. He is also a citizen on whom more than the ordinary obligations and rights of the citizen rest. In consequence of his—or her—presumed mastery of a body of knowledge, the teacher enjoys a certain deference and certain opportunities for influence which are not accessible in the same way and degree to the ordinary citizen. In all these activities—except in the internal affairs of his university, where he is among equals—the university teacher has a special position in consequence of his possession of superior knowledge. He may not be wiser than other citizens, but his knowledge is superior, in the sense that it is truer than what others who are not university teachers or members of research institutes possess in the same subject; it has been gained by systematic investigation and concentrated analysis; and he has more of it. All his obligations as a university teacher derive from, and are limited by, this possession of superior knowledge.

A substantive body of knowledge in itself has no necessary implications for the conduct of its possessor. The knowledge of the consequences of urbanization does not entail any particular course of action with regard to the question of whether urbanization is good or evil. But the pursuit of knowledge about urbanization or any other phenomenon of nature or culture does entail respect for the rules of the pursuit of knowledge; it entails affirmation of the standard of truthfulness. This in turn has implications for the transmission of knowledge, whether it be to young students, to the wider public, or to the powerful in society. It also has implications for conduct in universities—the institutions in which knowledge is activated, that is, acquired and transmitted.

The academic ethos is the sum of these obligations. It is in quite effective existence; it is not something excogitated outside the academic realm and offered as an alternative to what goes on there. It is already loosely respected by many academics; its articulation is intended to make them more aware of what they are already committed to. Despite this general observance, there have been many breaches in it. Repeating and underscoring it may lead academics to greater awareness of both the commitments and the breaches.

I

University teaching has generally been regarded as an occupation which is more than an occupation through which a livelihood is ob-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tained; it is an occupation which is called a profession. Calling it a profession means that in some important way it differs from other occupations, the fortunes of which are to be determined by the vicissitudes of the market, or syndical power, or governmental regulation. It is called a profession because it has been thought to be one of those occupations with special qualities which confer special privileges and obligations on those who practice it.

The professions are occupations in which particular kinds of knowledge are involved: knowledge of an elaborate sort such as can be acquired in the first instance by prolonged and methodical study. This is why the prototypical professions—law, medicine, and divinity—used to be called the "learned professions." That is also why the new, or minor, professions, in seeking to establish their integrity, seek association with universities as conferring the legitimacy which comes from the possession of superior knowledge.

The academic profession is distinguished by the possession and transmission of knowledge—not by its application, as is characteristic of the other learned professions. When it teaches about the application of knowledge to practical activities, it is not applying to practical activities the knowledge which it teaches. It receives, assimilates, and discovers knowledge by methodical study; it interprets and transmits that knowledge; it also transmits knowledge about the technique of discovery, interpretation, and application. University teaching, even in the teaching of technology, is not an application of knowledge; it is transmission of knowledge about the application of knowledge. A great deal of university teaching is not about practical application at all; it teaches what is known about particular phenomena and how to learn more about them. Just as a wood-carver's activity is to change the shape of wood, so a university teacher's activity is to acquire and transmit knowledge. Knowledge is to him what wood is to a wood-carver.

In modern universities, teaching is associated with research. The teacher does research and also bases his teaching on research; on the research of others if not his own. This same kind of knowledge is central in all the other roles of the university teacher. Research itself is the methodical acquisition of knowledge hitherto unknown. It is the university teacher's possession of superior knowledge—superior in amount, in intensity, in importance, and in truthfulness—knowledge not available to the layman—which is the ultimate ground for his being invited to give advice to governments and private bodies. It is the basis of the deference which he enjoys and which causes his sponsorship or affiliation to be sought by groups wishing to win the support of the electorate and of the public. The self-esteem and self-confidence of teachers, growing from an awareness of their possession of superior knowledge, are what prompts

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

them to assert publicly their attitudes on a great variety of issues which emerge in their society.

In the academic profession, the privilege of university autonomy and of autonomous control over appointment and promotion, of control over the definition of courses of study and the setting and marking of examinations, and the freedom of investigation and publication—all are, in principle, based on the superior knowledge of academics, in their respective subjects, over that of students and laymen.

The obligations of the academic profession derive primarily, if not exclusively, from the first obligation inherent in the custodianship, pursuit, acquisition, and transmission of knowledge—namely, the concern to establish truth in accordance with methodical procedures, by systematic study, in accordance with rules of evidence and logical principles of reasoning. The obligation to adhere to these standards is entailed in the acceptance of this custodianship. The acceptance of knowledge involves distinguishing true knowledge from false, and giving primacy to the former while avoiding the latter. It involves the concurrence of tradition and rational moral reflection and engagement with knowledge. Much of this ethos is educed from those who engage in the profession which has superior knowledge as its ground and focus.

If one engages in teaching and in research, in acquiring and transmitting and discovering knowledge, one acknowledges the postulate of the difference between truth and falsity and the superiority of the former over the latter. One acknowledges that there are criteria outside one's own desires and convenience which enable one to distinguish truth from falsity; one acknowledges that there are ways in which to distinguish truth from falsity.

II

Knowledge may be a constituent of instrumental action, but it is not in itself an instrumental action. It has an existence outside the instrumental action in which it might be used, or through which it might be gained. A teacher for whom truth has no intrinsic validity would be like a semiskilled workman to whom the product of his labor has only the value of the wage which it brings him.

There has been an effort in recent years to treat universities as if they were like any other economically productive enterprise. A few brilliant economists have attempted to show that universities should be analyzed in accordance with economic principles, and that insofar as they do not accord with economic reasoning, they should be brought to do so. There are writers who say that the universities should be more efficient or more "cost effective," which postulates that the outcome of a university's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

activities is measurable and commensurate with its measurable costs. They sometimes speak of the "cultural value" of university education, and say that that is not what they are measuring. Others say that the justification for universities lies in their contribution to economic growth, alleging in very general terms that the contribution of higher education to economic growth can be measured. Sometimes they have alleged that pure research should be looked upon as an investment in economically productive applied research, and should be treated exactly like any other investment. These attitudes have been far from that vulgar "grad-grind" attitude which has no time for impractical things. Yet in a way they represent, on a far higher intellectual level, the same sort of refusal to acknowledge the autonomous value of scientific and scholarly knowledge.

The academic profession has this in common with other learned professions: it is not exclusively oriented toward the market. It has never "met its costs" and it does not do so now. If, according to the counsel of economists and practical men, the universities were subjected to the market, they could at best offer and discover only the amounts and kinds of knowledge which their prospective recipients would be willing to pay for.

This economistic view was never seriously espoused in intellectual circles until recently, and even now it has not, as a comprehensive principle, found many adherents. A few publicists and academics have alleged that university teachers are like industrial workers and hence should avail themselves of the advantages offered by trade-union organization. They favor monopolies and subsidies to the universities so as to pay professors high salaries and allocate rewards on the basis of seniority. When they demand that the state or municipal government, or the private patrons of their university, should provide a larger subsidy, their argument usually lays stress on the important role of university teachers in making the higher forms of knowledge available as a cultural good and for the elevation of social status. A number of writers on the academic profession criticize appointments on permanent tenure because they think this creates monopolies which should be dissolved in favor of free competition for appointment. They justify this on the grounds that free competition would produce better teaching and better research—but the condition of being "better" is defined not in terms of profitability or "consumer satisfaction"; rather it is defined as an improvement in the quality of knowledge transmitted and discovered.

University teaching has been justified on the grounds that possession of the knowledge it presents and discovers improves the life of human beings through improving their understanding of the world, and that it can also contribute to the realization of an ideal of justice by enabling all

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

those who have the talent and the desire to develop their mental powers to the highest level. These arguments are not adduced very frequently nowadays, but they are still decisive elements in the thought about universities—by those who dwell in them and even those who write about them from the outside. This view postulates the objective existence and the intrinsic value of a cognitive culture, which individuals can, through university education, come to share. Its cost can be estimated in monetary terms as equivalent to the income which an individual renounces in order to obtain it, together with the "proportionate" cost of the libraries, laboratories, teachers' salaries, buildings, et cetera, which the individual "uses." Yet no such assessment is made of the monetary value of the culture which is cultivated, interpreted, taught, and added to and improved on in universities. The failure to make it is a consequence of its difficulty. But even if it were made, it would be largely beside the point in appreciation of the value of the knowledge which is dealt with by the academic profession.

The monetary value of a university education, in terms of the additional income university graduates receive in comparison with persons who are not graduates, can be roughly calculated. The value of the improvement of one's understanding cannot be calculated, and the amount of improvement to be supplied cannot be calculated on the basis of "effective demand." The things taught and discovered in universities can, in many of their aspects, be subjected to economic analysis, and their political and social preconditions and ramifications can also be estimated. But all these analyses skirt the vital center of the great cognitive enterprise of the human race of which universities, in their beginnings and again for nearly two centuries, have been the institutional site.

The economic analysis of university teaching is a valuable activity because in part its very limits show that universities offer something more than "useful" knowledge which can be adequately described in monetary terms.

What is at issue is truth. Truth is not something universities teach and seek only for a negative reason—namely, that if their colleges in medicine or engineering taught medical and engineering untruths, they would lose their students and their income after suits—for malpractice by wrongly diagnosed patients and for collapsed bridges—began to be reported. The value of truth is the irrefragable postulate underlying the academic activities of teachers of scientific, scholarly, and technological subjects. Their primary interest in teaching or discovering the truth is not based on the fact that students could not practice their professions profitably if they had been taught false views which, in the course of time, would lead to disasters for their clients or patients and themselves.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Universities take it for granted that they should teach the truth because they attribute an intrinsic value to it and to its possession. University teachers teach not by enunciating and affirming their obligation to truth in abstract terms—indeed, they do not like to hear the word truth or to hear that truth is what they are concerned with; they think it smacks of "absolutism" or theology, and they would sooner die than be buried by a theological undertaker. Nonetheless most of them do act in this way toward particular truths in their day-to-day preoccupations and actions; because their acceptance of the obligation is so integrated into their concrete activities, they do not articulate it. As a result, they sometimes deny what they are actually doing; they say that universities are not concerned with truth or knowledge and should be evaluated in the light of their practical utility. They often say frivolous things about the universities, but their own research and teaching usually contradict them. If they were not seeking cognitive truths, their actions would make no sense at all.

The discovery and teaching of cognitive truth is the distinctive task of the academic profession, just as the care of the patient's health is the distinctive task of the medical profession, and the protection, within the law, of the client's interests is the distinctive task of the legal profession. I have labored this point, which is obvious, because it is so often indignantly repudiated. The word truth and the idea of knowledge appreciated as an intrinsic good have, in many academic minds, become associated with "metaphysics," "theology," "idealism," "dogma," "religion"—in brief with all those values and qualities which positivistic, hardheaded, utilitarian scientists and scholars have rebelled against. Their actions almost always belie their words. Their concern that their statements, made in their teaching and formulated from their research, should be as true as possible—based on the most methodically gathered and analyzed evidence—is exactly what characterizes the academic profession. That is their best quality. Nevertheless they are doing a disservice to others, and an injustice to themselves, when they claim that they practice the profession of learning for reasons which exclude the concern to know what *is*. Because this postulate has often disappeared from sight amid the distractions of engagement—in action and thought—with demanding public issues, it is necessary to remind university teachers of what they have committed themselves to. The urgency of aiding in the movement toward social equality or justice, and of meeting requirements that they contribute to the practical work of society, sometimes causes academics to forget that the cultivation of truth is essential to, and distinctive of, their calling. Other objectives might exist alongside the cultivation of truthful knowledge. But without this, university teachers would be no more than agitators for social

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

arrangements which they think desirable, or a special sort of leisure class, which is "kept" by society because some of its members, such as teachers of medicine, law, or engineering, perform useful services.

III

When the university teacher is conducting research, he guides himself not only by the standards he has assimilated but also by the anticipated assessments of his peers. When he teaches, it is primarily the former which sustain his observance of the rules of his profession. The teacher's performance of most of his pedagogical duties is, unlike his accomplishments in research, not open to the scrutiny of his peers except at very long remove or indirectly and unreliably. One mechanism which subjects teachers to the scrutiny of their peers is the assessment of results by external examiners. Generally, however, it is rather difficult, in a large institution where a student studies with many teachers, to attribute reliably a student's achievements to the particular teachers who taught him. A student's performances in the classes of other teachers might allow the accomplishments of one teacher to become known to his colleagues. In the case of graduate or research students, the careful examination of a dissertation gives members of the committee of examiners an opportunity to assess the merits of a colleague as a supervisor of research. It is also possible to infer something about the merits of a teacher from the performances of his students in the professions and occupations which they enter later on. But this too is a long-term effect, and it is difficult to circumscribe it and to attribute it to particular causative factors such as teaching, least of all the teaching of a particular individual.

The simplest and most observable evidence—namely, the popularity of a teacher and the enthusiasm of students—is of highly variable value because the students are themselves generally not qualified to pass a sound judgment on the intellectual merit of what they receive. A teacher's temperament, his humor, his political views, his rhetorical skill, and other features of teaching which are ambiguously indicative of intellectual efficacy might well arouse their enthusiasm.

In recent years, various reformers have insisted on the desirability of accepting students' assessment of teaching as a measure of a university teacher's accomplishment. The very persons who argue against consumers' sovereignty on the grounds that the consumers' preferences are factitious would establish consumers' sovereignty in teaching at the very point where it is least reasonable. Students might appreciate their teachers for qualities other than their success in imparting knowledge and understanding and in arousing and guiding fruitfully their intellectual curiosity. Only the exceptional student would be able to pass judgment

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on the scientific or scholarly soundness of what his teacher communicated to him.

The academic profession has no specific course of training for those who wish to practice it except doctoral study, which is a course of training in research. In the United States in the past half century, and increasingly in Great Britain, a course of study leading to the doctorate has come to be regarded as the precondition for an academic career. For some time, however, American writers have criticized this requirement, arguing that since most university and college teachers only teach and do little or no research, the existing course of study for the doctorate is a false and misleading training. During the agitation among students in the 1960s, the cry went up for better teaching—echoed more feebly by expressions of a desire for training in teaching. Thus far no one has suggested how that can be done effectively.

In the future, it is possible that modes of training will be devised for university and college teachers, such as have become established for primary and secondary school teachers—although the successes achieved by the latter do not give grounds for great satisfaction at present. It seems to be generally believed that what is needed are improved "techniques": for the construction of syllabi, the delivery of lectures, and the conduct of seminars. The demand for the creation of such improvements in the training of prospective university and college teachers seldom includes the larger range of activities which academics are legitimately called upon to perform; it does not discuss the ethical side of the academic role, either in the narrower sense or more broadly.

Yet teaching in universities is more than the enunciation of general propositions or the exposition of established facts or interpretations. Teaching also entails conveying to students the dispositions and overtones which are entailed in the acquisition of knowledge, whether already established or newly discovered. The embodiment and representation of a sensibility and an ethos of the love of knowledge are essential parts of teaching. This is not done only, or even mainly, by explicit instruction, which might well be largely accomplished through expository skill; it works through empathy and identification. The objects of empathy and identification are in part the teacher's cognitive dispositions and in part his ethical dispositions toward the acquisition of knowledge, its possession, and its use. These dispositions are diffuse and pervasive. They extend beyond teaching into other spheres of academic activity, and their jurisdiction runs beyond the boundaries of specific disciplines.

A student in the presence of a teacher who takes his task seriously, and who is a master of the knowledge to be transmitted, is being presented with something essential to his own learning. Seriousness—I do not mean gloominess or humorlessness—is more essential than tech-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nique, although within limits technique is not to be dismissed. Seriousness is not an articulated set of beliefs; it becomes manifest in the bearing of the teacher toward his subject and his tasks. It comes through to the student in the most various ways. That is why teachers whose technical excellence in exposition leaves much to be desired are sometimes great teachers. Their greatness lies not in their coverage of the syllabus or in the orderliness and clarity of their lectures, but in the earnestness with which they perform their tasks.

The only immediate guarantee of the teacher's observance of his obligations to his students is his serious devotion to his calling, his belief in the value of what he teaches, and his conviction that it is eminently worth knowing. It is a matter of strictness of conscience, and conviction of the worth of the intellectual activity in which he is engaged. His patent pleasure in the presence of the truths of his own subject, his enjoyment of teaching about it, the grim commitment evident in his tone—any of these manifestations gives evidence of his sense of moral obligation to intellectual activity; and this is what arouses and compels students.

How can such things be guaranteed? In the classroom there is no directly operating institutional mechanism through which the conscience and conviction of the teacher can be sustained and reinforced in the same way as they are by his peers, whose judgment sustains and reinforces him. The intellectual probity of a university teacher in his classroom is sustained by the exacting interest of his students. The egg and the chicken who lays it and from which it is born are equally important to each other; so are teacher and student. The seriousness of the student is important to the seriousness of the teacher. This is the only worthwhile sense in which teachers and students form an intellectually sustaining community. It is not a matter of pleasing students; attempting to please them might require all sorts of supine and morally degrading flattery without intellectual substance. Meeting the demands of intellectually exacting students is a different thing. The high expectations of the best prepared and most exigent students will spur a teacher to exert himself to meet those expectations. Teaching which is aimed at the capacities of the lowest quartile of the student body will render most students apathetic; and apathetic students engender apathetic teaching.

The animation of the intellectual integrity of a teacher is also reinforced by the seriousness with which his colleagues approach their teaching. James Garfield's remark about Mark Hopkins and a student on a log is too simple. The teacher is nourished by the proximity of other serious teachers, just as the student is nourished by the presence of other serious students. Through them he comes to accept as the standard a serious attitude toward the teaching of undergraduates. The mainte-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nance of intellectual integrity is not only a matter of strength of character; it is also a function of the immediate environment of a teacher within his department and his university. Consciences reinforce each other, in intellectual matters as well as in others. The academic community thus supports the academic ethos in teaching, but not through the watchfulness of the institutions which assess particular works, such as occurs in the scientific community.

The policy of appointment is the third institutional condition for confirming the academic ethos in teaching. Since it is easier for a person of strong intellectual character to continue to be strong than it is for one with a weak character to become strong, much of the intellectual quality of a university will depend on the standards of intellectual strength which are applied in appointment. The fact that mistakes are bound to be made because the future development of a promising young person cannot be predicted with certainty is no ground for relaxation of scruples. The fact that one's university is not in the front rank of eminence is no reason for such relaxation. The plain fact of scrupulousness in appointments is itself a creative element in the intellectual morale of a university, because it confirms the standard of intellectual seriousness. Adherence to strict standards of appointment is a concentration, at a particular point, of the larger pattern of beliefs about what is expected of a university teacher. Not only are better persons recruited to a university in this manner, but those who are already there are made more aware of what is expected of them.

Nothing of what has been said in the foregoing pages implies that it is contrary to the natural or proper functions of universities to teach practical subjects which will enter into the proficient practice of practical-intellectual professions. It does imply, however, that it is not a proper task for universities to train young persons for occupations in which empirical knowledge and skill—knowledge and skill gained through practical experience—are the main constituents.

The postulate that the university is an institution, the primary obligation of which is the attainment and teaching of important and serious truths, does not exclude the study of truths which are susceptible of application. It does require that in teaching about, or investigating, the scientific and scholarly aspects of a practical problem, the intellectual criteria of truth and importance must not be qualified. It does not require that teachers should eschew the assertion of their political and ethical beliefs before their students. It does require that the teacher must avoid allowing it to appear that his political or ethical statements are cognitive statements, and that he must not let his cognitive statements be formed by his political or ethical ideals.

Correspondingly, the students must be pressed to attain the highest

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

level of knowledge which their immaturity, their capacities, and their previous acquisitions will permit. This is one of the places where the implications of the academic ethos are most neglected. Now that higher education is reaching much larger proportions of the generation between eighteen and twenty-two years of age than ever before, teachers in American and European universities, whatever their political views, have slipped into the belief that little is to be expected of their students. The result is an intellectual poverty in the syllabus.

For many years American universities have been severely criticized for their excessive interest in practicality. But it is not that "practical" subjects are being taught in American universities; it is, rather, that they have little substantial intellectual content. Generally too little is demanded of undergraduates. The teachers who devise syllabi do not take their students seriously enough, assuming that they are uninterested or incapable of hard work and of absorbing a considerable amount more than they are offered. True, many American undergraduates have been poorly educated in secondary schools, and are linguistically ill equipped, both in foreign languages and in English. This situation has been aggravated in recent years by the relaxation of standards of marking which resulted from student agitation in the second half of the 1960s, and has been additionally aggravated by pressure from the federal government and from within the university itself for "affirmative action" in the admission of minorities.

Consequently, in many large American and Continental universities undergraduates have been given little care. As the universities increased in size, and as funds for research became more easily available, undergraduate teaching, especially in the first two years, was left to teaching assistants, who were usually graduate students. The resulting low esteem for undergraduate education and the indifference of senior members of the academic staff to the undergraduates, together with the other factors, produced a situation in which little was expected of undergraduates.

It may well be that as the size of the university student body increases, the average capacity declines. Nonetheless it appears to me that the capacities which do exist are not being made as active as they might be. Students learn less than they could because they are not being taught what they are capable of assimilating. This is not a result of defective techniques of teaching or of the impossibility of individual instruction for great numbers of students, although I would not deny that these play some role. The main thing is that the teachers neglect the possibility of imparting more knowledge and of arousing their students to do more work—to spend longer hours at their studies, to read more widely and intensively, and to write more.

What it comes down to is a neglect of the academic ethos, of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

obligation to teach and to learn at the highest level of which the teacher and student are capable. Can this be cured by the institution of administrative devices of control, such as the stipulation of numbers of "contact hours," and by regular surveys of student opinion about particular courses and particular teachers? I am certain that such measures are valueless. Only the moral self-discipline of university teachers can cure it.

IV

University teachers not only conduct research and teach; they perform these activities within universities and departments, and these institutions must be kept going, since research and teaching could not be carried on without them. Despite their indispensability, there are university teachers who are indifferent to the institutional setting, "the administration" of the university; more than indifferent, they are often hostile to it. They would, of course, agree that students must be admitted and supervised, that their courses of study and syllabi must be organized and repeatedly revised, that decisions must be made about appointments and promotions of staff, and that the students must be examined. They are quite willing to play their part in these activities. They expect that resources will be acquired and administered, that buildings and grounds, libraries and laboratories will be furnished and maintained, and that books and equipment will be procured. All these are tangible conveniences and prerequisites for their teaching and research, and they expect them to be provided.

A university is in one respect an aggregation of individual scholars and scientists who teach students and do research within a more or less delimited space, and who are provided with remuneration, facilities, and services by an administrative corps. It is also an intellectual corporation in which the presence of other scientists, scholars, and students is integral to the work and achievements of each member. It is, in addition, an organization in which decisions must be made regarding the allocation of resources among the various parts, in which authority must be distributed, and from which representations to the external society must be initiated. Many activities, apparently remote from the acquisition, creation, and transmission of knowledge, must be effectively carried on in order for a university to perform its intellectual tasks. If they are not, the performance of its intellectual functions suffers.

The effective performance of these functions which are remote from the intellectual sphere requires not only administrative organization and authority; it also requires civility—which is the concern for the whole—on the part of the academic staff and the students. The cleavages

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

between academic staff and "the administration," between groups of teachers on political and personal grounds, between groups of students and groups of teachers, and among the students—all detract from the civility which is essential in the academic ethos. Academic civility has been impaired in recent years. In most of the universities which were disrupted in the period of the students' agitation, a measure of calm has been restored. The cleavages have been bridged, but the centrifugal tendencies have by no means been altogether overcome. The multiplicity of disciplines, the almost unencompassable volumes of knowledge contained in each, and parochialism, departmental as well as intellectual, are practically impossible to expunge from academic existence. The modes of financial support for research by governments and private foundations foster the self-centeredness indispensable to successful research. The attractions of public events and public contention about nonacademic matters continue. Academic civility is therefore under great strain. Yet without it, the setting which is essential to the cultivation of knowledge is disrupted.

There need not be uniformity of outlook regarding politics or university policies for the unarticulated influence of academic civility to be effective. There must be agreement, however, about the primacy of intellectual things and about the criteria for assessing the quality of intellectual performance. Yet where severe conflicts occur within a university, this consensus is weakened and with it the vague osmotic influence of each scientist and scholar on the others. Wherever political or other partisan loyalties obtrude, they weaken the force of intellectual influence.

Conflicts among teachers, and between teachers and "the administration," not only tear the delicate filaments which enable the intensifying and strengthening influence to flow from one individual to another and from the individual to the rest of his colleagues; they also disrupt the students. Divisions fracture the students' reception of that penumbra of conviction of the importance of intellectual things, and of the standards of achievement which that conviction implies. Whatever the system of university government, it is affected by the strength of the consensus about intellectual things. One of the causes of the gradual transfer of authority from the American university president to the departments was the increased strength of this consensus about the primacy of intellectual things which took form as the leading American universities became centers of advanced training and research. Of course, the best presidents, like William Rainey Harper, Daniel Coit Gilman, and Andrew Dixon White encouraged the growth of that consensus.

If universities are to provide the nourishing matrix of consensus

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about the standards of intellectual accomplishment, a good deal of academic civility is called for. This does not mean that very outstanding individuals cannot get on with their work without such civility, but in doing so they are weakening the matrix by which their colleagues are sustained in their own intellectual work.

V

University teachers are members of their larger society, with the rights and obligations of all citizens; they perhaps also have additional obligations arising from their superior knowledge. The activity of university teachers, outside research, is addressed to laymen—that is, persons who have less knowledge than they themselves possess. In their domestic, convivial, and communal relationships their superior knowledge has no bearing, although they are frequently accorded a degree of deference in recognition of this superiority of knowledge, regardless of its irrelevance in the situation in question. Academics have all sorts of interests and aspirations, just as do physicians and lawyers and engineers and factory workers. They are interested in higher salaries and security of tenure. They are often politically partisan. Neither these private desires, nor their wishes for certain economic and social policies to be carried out, nor their preferences for particular economic, social, and political arrangements lighten the obligation which they have taken upon themselves by entering the academic profession; the obligation is valid even where they infringe upon it.

As with physicians, lawyers, and engineers, it is no different with a university teacher: he must not allow his political partisanship to influence his teaching or the collection or interpretation of data in research. Admittedly it is more difficult for a teacher to control this tendency in the social sciences or in some branches of the humanities, but that only makes it more of an obligation to watch and discipline himself. In his research, however, quite in addition to his moral self-scrutiny and self-discipline, he is watched over by his colleagues. If he infringes on the obligations of painstaking observation, or of rigor in analysis, the referees of his paper, the reviewers of his monograph, will catch him out. His reputation will be damaged. External control within the community of his fellow-scholars or fellow-scientists will reinforce his self-discipline. An equally satisfactory solution is not so available where his audience knows less about his subject than he does.

A university teacher who is invited by a governmental or private body to give expert advice on a matter in which a decision calls upon scientific knowledge, is in a position not entirely unlike that of a teacher before his students. He is addressing an audience which knows less about

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his subject than he does. A university teacher is under as exacting an obligation to see that his concern for the integrity of knowledge in the public arena should not be determined by his economic or political interests or attachments as when he is teaching within the university.

It seems to me that the primacy of the undertaking to respect and further the truth in all the activities in which the university teacher engages, as a custodian of the best knowledge available through the best procedures, is quite straightforward. The difficulties are to work out its implications and to discover how adherence to them can be fostered. My own view is that the teacher must avoid exploiting the authority conferred on him by the superiority of his knowledge as an opportunity to expound to his students certain views of nature or society which are not as true as the best available techniques and literature can make them. Nor should he claim for his assertions a greater veracity than the best evidence can justify. His obligations to truthfulness should prohibit the exploitation of the cognitive inferiority of his audience. The same should obtain for his relations with individuals or institutions to which he is summoned as an expert adviser. Scrupulousness in adherence to the strictest standards of truthfulness is incumbent on him in both situations. This entails, on the one side, avoidance of distortions impelled by political and moral convictions and, on the other, willingness to admit ignorance and insufficient knowledge.

VI

Superiority in knowledge characterizes the relationship of the member of a learned profession to the laity whom he serves. He enjoys a deference accorded him because of the imputation of disinterestedness in the service of truthful knowledge. This confidence is abused when the university teacher, in his pedagogical, investigative, publicistic, or advisory capacities, presents as true what is not true according to his best lights and the best lights of his peers. Just as the central value of the academic profession is cognitive truth, so the central obligations of the academic ethos are adherence to the standard of truthfulness and respect for the fiduciary responsibility engendered by the possession of knowledge.

In certain respects, the burden of adherence to the standard of truthfulness is lightest in the specialized natural sciences and in those parts of the social sciences which are closest to them. By burden I do not mean psychological strain, but rather the extent to which adherence must be achieved without the immediate support of colleagues in the academic community.

In one particular regard, the academic profession, especially in the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sciences, has an advantage which the other professions do not have. The advantage of the academic scientist lies in the relatively public character of scientific procedure and the similarly public status of his results. Both are assessed by experts in the field or subfield in which he is working. Even before publication, his work is open to his colleagues' surveillance when he presents it before a meeting of a learned society. A scientist or scholar often works in solitude, but when he publishes the results of his research he must also provide the evidence on which he bases his conclusions, and he must describe the procedures he has used. Before those results can be assimilated into the body of accredited scientific or scholarly knowledge, scientists or scholars no less qualified than himself, and often better qualified, will examine what he has done.

This type of scrutiny does not require exceptional judicial proceedings. It is going on all the time. It goes on when a doctoral dissertation is assessed by its supervisors and examiners, when a scientific paper submitted to a journal is assessed by referees and editors, when a published paper is studied by research workers engaged in an investigation to which the particular paper is relevant. Scientific and scholarly work, if it is not disregarded and left unacknowledged and unesteemed by competent scholars and scientists, is subjected to critical publicity as long as it bears on currently interesting problems. The scientist is aware of this in conducting his research and in writing up his results, and he will attempt, as scrupulously as he can, to avoid censure for failing to live up to the standards. Scientists do not observe the rules just because they fear disclosure of wrongdoing. They have also assimilated an unformulated code of scientific rectitude. Much of their preparation has been training in this code; most of them have come to the profession of science with the code incipiently implanted in their scientific curiosity and their scruples.

Partly in consequence of the conjoint action of the institutions of assessment and the internal rootedness of the code, the ethical performance in research is high. Very few cases of cheating have been disclosed in science by the mechanism of public examination, and since the mechanism is applied to every published work, there are probably not many undetected cases. The scholar who is detected in cheating by plagiary or falsification of observations must leave the field in disgrace. Reputable institutions will no longer give him hospitality; serious research workers will cease to take his work seriously.

The system of selection and promotion in the academic world works to compel observance of the standard of truthfulness. Universities are hierarchically arranged within any given national society and, among such societies, in the international academic community. This hierarchy is not officially acknowledged, and it is not an object of complete

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

agreement; it is also ambiguous or blurred in its internal boundaries. Nonetheless it exists, and one of the main criteria by which universities are roughly ranked is their members' reputation, acquired over the years, for adhering to the tradition of the dispassionate and intensive pursuit of important truths in a very wide range of fields. Their prominence holds before scholars and scientists the model of such an interest in the acquisition and furtherance of knowledge. The leading figures in these fields, often relatively concentrated in particular institutions (which are called "leading" for this reason), present a model which, without being explicit, keeps the lesser members of the respective parts of the profession up to the mark.

The love of truth and the passion for discovery are fostered and even intensified by, on the one side, fear of censure and, on the other, perception of the names and works of persons whose activities and products incorporate the standard. One may add to these the desire for glory which can be achieved only by a piece of work that, under critical assessment, proves itself capable of resisting the inquisitive criticisms of other qualified members of the academic profession. It is known that glory can be attained only by conformity with the prevailing standard and by transcendent originality within the framework of that conformity. This has a disciplinary effect.

The discipline is effective because the influence of institutional and professional colleagues runs in the same direction as the internal moral orientation of the person who conceives of himself or herself as a scientist or scholar. That very self-designation—and the aspiration toward it when one is younger—bears within itself an entelechy of scrupulous submission to the standard of truthfulness.

VII

Whatever critics without understanding may say about universities, they are certainly not "ivory towers" in the present century, and least of all at the present time. In fact, there is a danger of the world being too much with them. Events external to their scientific and scholarly subject matters press in upon them. University teachers are frequently drawn into public assertions in which their audience consists neither of their academic peers nor of their pupils. They enter into public discussions because certain issues in the larger society outside the universities affect them deeply, and also because they can increase their incomes with fees from consultations, broadcasting, lectures to lay audiences, and contributions to literary and political journals and newspapers. The two motives work jointly. Sometimes university teachers are invited to perform these services by outsiders who seek to benefit by the knowledge and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prestige which university teachers possess; sometimes the teachers themselves initiate the action.

What are the obligations of university teachers when they engage in publicistic and political activities? Unfortunately the traditions of university life are silent on these matters. Until the nineteenth century, during the long period of restricted politics, university teachers did not mix much in public affairs. They were expected to be loyal servants of the state and of the dominant church or sect which supported their academic institutions. Only in the nineteenth century did university teachers become involved, on a considerable scale, in issues of concern to a broader public outside the universities. The emergence of public opinion and public contention, about policy as well as the movements of humanitarian and political reform, and, not least, the public confrontation between widely accepted beliefs and results of scientific and scholarly investigation—all these changed the situation. In these controversies academic scientists and scholars were often forced to one side or another, because the issues involved subjects they had studied. As a result, it became more and more difficult for academics to avoid being touched by, and drawn into, participation in public discussion. These were serious matters, and academic traditions required attitudes toward them. The constitutionality and legality of governmental actions, governmental policies regarding foreign trade, the divinity of Jesus, the veracity of biblical cosmogony and historiography, the extent and causes of destitution, the foreign and military policies of government, the illegal actions of business enterprises in collusion with civil servants and legislators—these were among the numerous public issues, specific and general, to which university teachers gave their attention. Academics often censured governments and criticized prevalent religious beliefs, and this not infrequently led to the wrath of the powerful. At the same time there was an increasingly explicit repugnance in academic circles in Great Britain and the United States against the practice of requiring that academics adhere to the particular religious beliefs of powerful sections of society. The penalty for the expression of views displeasing to the powerful was, on occasion, suspension or dismissal or refusal of appointment.

In the course of these developments, the idea of academic freedom slowly took shape. An extension of the idea of the corporate autonomy of universities, it was encouraged by the expanding liberal belief in the rights of the individual citizen, and by the diminished status of the churches and sects. The doctrine of academic freedom was promulgated both to assure academics that they would be masters in their own house and to protect them from censure and penalty, such as might be imposed on them by the extra-academic powers or their own nonacademic gov-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

erning bodies—whether they were, in the ultimate instance, the crown, the government, a church or sect, or a body of lay regents or trustees.

Another aspect of academic freedom—one that is not always clearly separated from the freedom to act and speak with impunity in the public sphere and in the universities—is the freedom to teach, do research, and publish in accordance with one's scientific and scholarly convictions, always with the understanding that these convictions conform with prevailing criteria of scientific and scholarly truth. Convictions here do not simply mean strongly held beliefs, but beliefs which are based on rational analysis and disciplined observation as they are practiced in scientific and scholarly disciplines. This is, in short, the freedom to conform with the academic ethos, without interference or sanction from individuals and groups which do not live according to the academic ethos.

Does the jurisdiction of the academic ethos extend beyond the limits of the university? When an academic acts or speaks outside the university, is he bound by his academic obligations to adhere to certain standards of intellectual integrity? Does the fact that he is an academic impose any restraint on his freedom in the public sphere? It does, insofar as his representations purport to be based on reason, observation, and careful study and as long as they claim the authority of expertise. Academics who speak in public about the issues which engage public opinion almost always allow the presumption that they speak with the authority of academic study. If they do, then they certainly have a duty to respect the obligations entailed in the custodianship and representation of knowledge. Even if they could divest themselves of that presumption, the obligation would still exist. Legally an academic is entitled to tell as many half-truths and falsehoods in public as any politician, journalist, or agitator. He is legally entitled to be as demagogic and misleading as any other unscrupulous person. It could quite plausibly be claimed that a citizen should not be handicapped in his political conduct by his academic profession, that the political sphere is different from the academic sphere, and that the obligations of the latter are not valid in the former. Max Weber, at least in his essay on *Wertfreiheit*, seemed to accept this view.

The view might be more acceptable if the two spheres were entirely disjoined from each other, but they are not. For one thing, the university teacher in the sphere of public discussion seldom divests himself of the appurtenances of his academic life; he uses his academic title, and he allows his academic connections to be known. In fact, he would not have such easy access to the public forum if he did not have these academic qualifications and if it were not believed that his assertions carried with them the authority of long and scrupulous study. The hearing which an

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

academic receives from laymen is made more attentive because laymen believe that academics are specially qualified to speak about the issue at hand, by their detached cast of mind as well as their large stock of relevant and reliable knowledge. He himself usually acts on that presumption. I conclude, therefore, that an academic transmitting knowledge in the public and political sphere has the same obligations as those entailed in the transmission of knowledge in the academic sphere.

An academic in the public sphere does not have the same constraints working on him as when he is conducting research and presenting its results to his colleagues. He is not subjected to measured, painstaking assessment by persons who know as much as he does. He is indeed criticized by those academics who disagree with him, but since the intellectual standard of public discourse is generally regarded by academics as less exigent than that which should prevail within the academic community, the rhetoric of their criticism is usually in the same vein as the rhetoric of his public statements.

The acquisition and possession of knowledge imposes the obligation of a high standard of veracity from which the academic is not entitled to discharge himself. The academic acting in the public sphere has a special obligation which is incumbent on him in consequence of this possession of an elaborate body of scientific or scholarly knowledge and, more generally, because his public standing is granted him by virtue of his presumed commitment to such knowledge. He can, it is true, be criticized for what he says in the public sphere, but many persons who are not in a position to render an intellectually qualified criticism of his assertions are nonetheless citizens with the obligation to make up their minds about the general line of policy which public bodies should follow. The academics who participate in public political discussion have an obligation to these persons which is similar to the obligation they have to their students. In both cases, they are addressing themselves to persons who presumably know less about the subjects under consideration than they themselves do and who are in a sense dependent on this probity The academic who, in speech or in writing, addresses himself to a larger public in the field of his expertise should regard himself as bound by the trust which his audience is expected to grant him as a scholar or scientist. Even if that audience has no special expectations, he himself should have them. Logically, nothing in any proposition requires that the person who knows something should avoid distorting it or suppressing it. Nonetheless the ethical postulates of the value of truth and the worthwhileness of striving for it, which are constituents of the academic ethos, are incompatible with a cavalier attitude toward the truth when public discussion is going on.

What about those academics, like biochemists and astronomers, who

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are not experts on the matters on which they hold forth in the political arena? Do they lighten their responsibilities by studiously eschewing the use of their titles, honors, and university associations when they speak or write before a larger public? They are deferred to because it is thought that they possess the detachment and disinterestedness of academic scientists and scholars. This deference is often exploited. If, as is often the case, their qualifications for receiving the attention of the public are little different from those of any other citizen, they should not seek to enhance the persuasiveness of their arguments and analyses by allowing their academic status and connections to be thrown into the balance.

VIII

The entry of academics directly into the service of government corresponds to the old ideal of the philosopher as a counselor of princes. It is far older than the practice of academic engagement in public contentions. In recent decades, this ideal has had a renascence on a large scale, as the prestige and capacities of science and learning have grown and as governments have increased the range and depth of their intervention into the societies they rule.

The situation of the adviser to governments has been made difficult in the past decade. Governments have undertaken the solution of grave problems demanding scientific and scholarly knowledge, and scientists and scholars have declared their willingness to help. Often, unfortunately, the kind of knowledge which meets high academic standards is not available, but this does not diminish the determination to find solutions. The munificent support offered by governments and private patrons for research into these problems does not dissolve the uncertainty of much that is offered as scientific knowledge. In the social sciences, research on the social problems with which policy deals has not diminished the ambiguity and indeterminateness of knowledge in those fields. Nor has the genuine progress of scientific knowledge in the numerous spheres with which an increasingly active government deals reduced the uncertainty of the knowledge which is drawn upon.

Meanwhile, within the academic profession rancorous dissent from the previously dominant academic ethos has arisen. It is not so much the inadequacy of the existing stock of knowledge which is so vehemently criticized as it is the underlying ethos itself. The possibility of objectivity has been denied and those who argue that such objectivity is desirable have been denounced as self-deceiving deceivers. Devotion to truth is derogated as "elitist" self-indulgence. Scrupulous care in the training and support of the next generation of scientists and scholars is regarded as the exercise of a guild monopoly, to assure the continued flow of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

benefits to a small group of entrenched beneficiaries and their favorites.

None of these accusations have caused the decline of the government's interest in advice and in research to gain new knowledge to aid in the solution of practical problems. The accusations have darkened the atmosphere, and they have not illuminated the genuine issues. They have not helped to define the academic ethos and to draw from it its necessary implications. And to some extent they have weakened attachment to that ethos.

The advisory role has come into existence on the assumption that the academic person possesses knowledge which is regarded as necessary for an effective decision and which the person or persons constitutionally charged with making the decision do not possess. Again it is the relationship of cognitive superiority which raises the ethical question. The adviser usually renders his advice in confidence, although when he renders it to committees of legislative bodies, this limitation does not ordinarily obtain; in any case confidences are seldom respected within the government of the United States. The advice, especially when confidential, is not subject to the scrutiny of other persons who may be more or less equally expert. The relationship between adviser and advised is much like that of teacher and student, except that the advised person has ordinarily had considerable practical experience and may not be as easily imposed upon as a student. He may, in fact, often be obdurately attached to a certain line of policy and have little or no inclination to change his attachment to his position in the light of better knowledge. He may indeed choose an adviser whose advice he expects will appear to support his policy. Advisers, then, may be exploited by those whom they are supposed to be advising as often as they themselves exploit those whom they advise. This becomes a moral problem for an adviser in a sense only slightly different from that which we have been discussing. When the advice or the adviser's name is made public, the academic is participating in a situation where his academic status and his reputation as a scholar or scientist are being used to justify actions and policies in which his knowledge will not be drawn upon. It is like the case of the academic who exploits his own status and reputation to justify statements which cannot be justified by the standard which commitment to the custodianship of knowledge entails. The difference is that in the latter case the academic is the exploiter; in the former, it is the politician or civil servant who is exploiting the status of knowledge and the prestige which the academic derives from it. It is reprehensible in both cases.

The academic adviser must resist the temptation to speak beyond what he knows, pretending to know what he does not know in order to manipulate the advised into making a decision politically congenial to himself. He must also resist the temptation which leads him to be

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

degraded by supplying the prestige of his academic position and past accomplishments to legitimate a policy to which his knowledge contributes nothing.

Both temptations are great. The anticipation that one's views, if given in confidence, will not be subjected to the careful scrutiny of well-qualified colleagues could make one less circumspect than one would be in the setting of the scientific community. Confidentiality is often desirable, but it is also perilous for the adviser and the advised. The attraction of ostensible glory, of intimacy with the powerful, may have a blinding effect. The adviser is often a person of strong convictions regarding both his knowledge and the particular policy he wishes to promote. The adviser is often not concerned that he has been brought in to provide a certificate of intellectual respectability for a policy which has already been chosen without his advice.

Some critics of the hitherto prevalent organization of advice have recommended that all advice be made public, so that it can be criticized in public. But not all advice ought to be made public. Furthermore, the means of making it public do not guarantee that it will be presented in a form which will permit adequate criticism by qualified persons. Nor would it guarantee the meticulous study characteristic of the scientific community in the unraveling and assessment of difficult scientific arguments. Publicity alone is not a guarantee of scrupulousness unless the participants themselves are scrupulous, and public debate in most countries, including the United States, does not have such a tradition. Other critics of the present practice recommend that expert advisers with differing views should confront each other, so that they may clarify the substance of, and reasons for, their disagreement. Those who seek advice do not desire dilemmas; that is why they have turned to "science" to give them ostensibly unambiguous answers to questions which they themselves have not always formulated.

Not all the shortcomings of academic advisers are attributable to their moral weaknesses in the observance of their obligations. The plain fact of the matter is that scientific and technological knowledge is often inadequate to the problems under consideration. There is often no "scientific answer" to the problem a legislator or administrator puts to a scientist, and it lies with the conscience of the academic adviser to make this unmistakably clear.

IX

A fundamental postulate of the academic ethos has been the intrinsic value of methodically gathered knowledge about serious things. This postulate has not been questioned within the academic community.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Much of the financial support provided by public and private patrons for the pursuit of knowledge is stimulated by the belief that large parts of such knowledge would, in the short or long run, be applicable in practice—that is, in technology. For most of the history of science, inside and outside the universities, it was believed that nothing but good could result from the pursuit of scientific knowledge and that the increase of knowledge itself enhanced the dignity of human life. The technological application of knowledge in every sphere added to the achievement of worthwhile ends, such as the prolongation of life, the improvement of the standard of living, and the lightening of physical labor. The process of research itself—so ran the belief—could never do any harm, although on rare occasions an experimenter might have been killed in an accidental explosion or by infection.

The invention of the nuclear bomb introduced a change in the situation, which was then aggravated by the outbreak of dissatisfaction over the pollution of land, air, and sea; the ecological consequences of the use of pesticides; the dangers of the use of food preservatives, et cetera. Yet these were apprehensions about the uses of knowledge; knowledge itself was left unimpugned. Further apprehensions have been raised in connection with the possibilities of the extra-uterine conception of human beings and of "genetic engineering" applied to human beings. In the wake of these has come the censure of experimentation on human beings in biomedical research. All this represents a new stage of uneasiness about scientific knowledge. From the dangers of misuse of results, a step was taken toward questioning the propriety of the deliberately used procedures. Most recently there has been apprehension about the injurious effects of experiments on recombinant DNA. The fear in this instance is about the dangers of accidents in the course of research. Finally, in certain countries there has been a rather acrimonious resistance to the study of the genetics of intelligence. Some investigators have been harassed, and support for their research has been refused because it has been thought that the results of their research, should they become known, would obstruct or devalue ethically worthy ends.

In the past, the growth of scientific knowledge was known to have consequences which might injure part of the population. The clergy and the community of religious believers probably suffered a loss of faith and a diminution of standing in consequence of the growth of scientific knowledge. This was accepted by nearly everyone after a short period of resistance by the churches and sects. It was, after all, only a triumph of knowledge and reason over what were alleged to be superstition and dogma. The present set of charges against scientific inquiry does not tolerate such a cheerful reply.

These recent questions seem to me to raise problems for the aca-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

demic ethos. They do not, however, annul the supreme value of the activities which the academic ethos should govern, nor the importance of clarifying our minds about what the substance and scope should be.

The academic ethos is not a way of life for all of society. It is not a cure for the ills of society. There is much that is beyond its powers in the larger economy of human life. Its jurisdiction lies within the sphere of the acquisition and the transmission of knowledge, and the conduct of its possessors beyond the boundaries of the academic world. That itself is a very wide field of action, and one which demands deep and persistent reflection. But one thing is certain: the clarification of the academic ethos is even more urgent now than when Lord Ashby wrote about it more than a decade ago.

Conjuring

ROBERT CORDING

Wherever you go there is at least one person
Who knows. Around him you invent yourself,
Conjure stories of all you have wanted to do
Or have done, but in your head. Your unused
Hands hide in your pockets like guilts.
You find yourself making more jokes than usual
As you lean back in a chair, hoping to appear
Casual, the way one who has seen enough
Sits easy in his skin. If he were to look
At you, you would shift in your seat. Behind
His eyes you imagine all that you have covered.
When you talk (and you cannot stop yourself)
He collects your speech like a pool of water.
It falls into his deep silence without assent
Or denial. Already your best contrivances
Gasp for breath, kick wildly for the surface.

ROBERT CORDING teaches at Holy Cross College. His work has appeared in such journals as the *Kansas Quarterly, Prairie Schooner,* and *Commonweal.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dürer Sketches His Mother in Charcoal

Norbert Krapf

Too ill to sit in the booth
in the Nuremberg marketplace
to sell her son's prints,
she now sat at home staring
at the arthritic hands which
lay like lame animals in her
lap. She waited for his visits.
When he came, they used words
as though they had to be
imported from abroad. Drawing
skin on her face that was
withered as an old potato,
he thought of the eighteen
children she had borne into
the world. Covering her thin
gray hair with a charcoal
shawl, he thought "of the plague
and divers other distempers,"
as he later wrote, "that
frequently afflicted her."
As he sketched in the cheeks
whose flesh was sinking beneath
the bones and the taut mouth
whose corners rippled with
downcurving lines, he recalled

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"the derision . . . and all manner
of terrors and adversities" it
was her lot in life to bear.
He slowly filled in the eyes
which seemed to gaze toward
that world where she soon expected
to meet the thirteen children
she had buried. When he finished
the sketch, he kissed her wrinkled
forehead and walked down the noisy
narrow streets with memories
stinging him like hornets.
When she died two months later,
he wrote: "She looked far lovelier
in death than she had in life."

✪ NORBERT KRAPF, author of *Finding the Grain: Pioneer Journals, Franconian Folktales, Ancestral Poems* and a chapbook of poems, *The Playfair Book of Hours*, teaches English at the C. W. Post Center of Long Island University.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Historians of the Classical World and Their Audiences

ARNALDO MOMIGLIANO

When we speak of Greek or Roman writers and their public, an obvious distinction must be made. Some of the most important classical literary genres—say epic poetry, drama, oratory, and lyric poetry (at least in some of its varieties)—were written for a given situation and had an intrinsically ceremonial character. Epic poetry originally had the function of evoking a significant past and entertaining guests in royal and aristocratic gatherings, as Homer himself explains. Tragedy and comedy were ceremonial productions in the most formal way and never lost their original connection with religious festivals. Oratory was defined by its setting—either tribunals or (what at least for the Greeks was almost the same) assemblies. More rarely, orators performed as ambassadors before kings. Lyric poetry often presupposed addresses to gods, heroes, sovereigns, or winners of games. Even when poetry is related to personal (political or erotic) circumstances, there is no doubt in the poet's mind as to whom he is addressing. A convivial setting is often presupposed by lyric poetry, as it was by epic poetry. A further common feature of these ceremonial performances was that very often they took the form of competition between performers. In poetry, the victor was given a prize; in oratory, victory was normally indicated by the assembly's acceptance of the speaker's thesis or plea.

Other literary genres were not so ceremonial and tied to specific occasions. But they were clearly defined by their didactic purposes. It was perhaps Hesiod who introduced the Greeks to didactic poetry; he was certainly the man who made the Greeks at home with it. He had in mind some individuals, like his brother Perses, or some groups to whom he wanted to pass on what the Muses had told him. When the earliest philosophers came into being in the sixth century B.C. they continued the work of Hesiod in the sense that they had something definite to teach to people who were evidently ignorant of their specific subjects. Some

ARNALDO MOMIGLIANO, the distinguished historian, is Professor Emeritus at University College, London; Alexander White Professor at the University of Chicago; and Professore Ordinario in Soprannumero Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa. His most recent book is *Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

philosophers, such as Pythagoras, founded a sect. Some others, such as Heraclitus, deposited their books in a local temple. These archaic philosophers must have been feeling their way in a world that was not used to them. Nobody really knows what it was like being Thales or Anaximenes or Parmenides. The stories about the Seven Wise Men, though they go back at least to the fifth century, leave out what was most strikingly new in the philosophers' activities—their ideas. But with the Sophists any ambiguity about the nature of the philosophic profession was dispelled. These philosophers were going to be teachers and to have a more or less precise part in education—bad education, according to the opponents of the Sophists, but still education. The same must be said of those who began to write about medicine, mathematics, or geography. A nice point about the geographers is that they helped people who wanted to know what they would see if they traveled, as well as those who did not want to travel.

II

The peculiarity of the historians is that they neither became a profession nor had a ceremonial task; nor did they have a clearly defined type of knowledge to discover or to transmit. They arrived late on the market (in the fifth century B.C.) and were never certain of finding a buyer for their products. There are stories of success (even of prizes) for historians. Some of them ultimately found employment qua historians. But these were exceptions. Unlike the poets, philosophers, and orators, historians never became a distinct group of entertainers or teachers. They never acquired a recognized place in society. It can be no accident that so many Greek historians were exiles from their own countries and that so many Roman historians were elderly senators; the former wrote history when they were barred from normal life in their own cities, the latter wrote history when their active life was approaching its end. They managed, however, to attract audiences wherever Greek or Latin was understood, and we must ask ourselves how they did it. The precondition of their success, but not the explanation of it, is of course the nonparochial character of their writing.

The history writing that emerged in Greece in the fifth century B.C. was clearly, in subject matter and outlook, nonlocal. It dealt with great events, such as the Persian and the Peloponnesian Wars; it was interested in foreign countries such as Mesopotamia and Egypt. Some writers dealt with regional history (Attica) or local history (the city of Lampsacus), but apparently in such a way as to interest outsiders. Characteristically, the two masters of local history, Charon of Lampsacus and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hellanicus of Lesbos, did not confine themselves to the events of their native places. They spoke to the Greeks in general rather than to the members of the city or region in which they were born.

The situation may have been different in previous centuries, if there is any truth in a much discussed passage of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*On Thucydides*, 5) suggesting that in a not-well-defined past local historians registered the events of individual states (either Greek or non-Greek) on the basis of local records. Such histories would, of course, have been consulted on specific events by fellow citizens, for practical or sentimental or ritual reasons. But these archaic local historians, if they ever existed, left no certain trace; the names given by Dionysius raise all sorts of difficulties. We must admit the possibility of their having existed, but we are also entitled to ask how Dionysius, who lived in the late first century B.C., would have known about them.

No Greek historian about whom we have reliable information lived before 500 B.C., and none (to the best of our information) wrote exclusively for local consumption. It remains for us to find out how these historians reached their public, as they were neither teachers nor ceremonial performers in the way that orators were. Insofar as this question has ever been considered, it has produced an answer that can be summarized in the following terms: In the fifth century B.C., historians began to attract audiences in the literal sense by organizing public recitations of their own work. Herodotus did that regularly, but Thucydides attacked Herodotus' performances as meretricious and contrary to the interest of truth (I, 22); as for himself, he decided to *write* (not to *speak*) for the benefit of future readers. After Thucydides, public readings of historical works either were discontinued or lost importance in comparison with the diffusion of historical information by way of the written word.

This picture is not only one-sided and insufficient, as we shall soon see; it is also, in itself, misleading. We have much more abundant and reliable information about public readings of historical works (by the historians themselves or by somebody else) in Hellenistic and Roman times—that is, from the third century B.C. to the fourth century A.D.—than in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. This does not invalidate the probability that Herodotus read his work in public; our information on ancient intellectual life is too haphazard and badly distributed to allow inferences of this kind. But what little we know suggests that throughout classical antiquity it was customary to announce or to celebrate the publication of a work of history with a public reading; in other words, public readings either preceded or accompanied the diffusion of individual historical works in manuscript copies.

For instance, we know that in the early second century B.C. the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

historian Mnesiptolemus read his history before Antiochus III, king of Syria (Athenaeus, *The Deipnosophists*, 10, 432 B). Later in that century the "historiographer" Aristotheus from the city of Trezene read his work in Delphi for several consecutive days and was honored for that (Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, 3rd ed., No. 702). In the time of Augustus, the historian Timagenes used to read his histories in public (Seneca, *On Wrath*, 3, 23, 6).

The future emperor Claudius seems to have disgraced himself with his own attempts (Suetonius, *Life of Claudius*, 41). After A.D. 378, Ammianus Marcellinus, a Greek-speaking soldier from Antioch in Syria, settled in Rome, mastered Latin, and produced in Latin the most important history of the Roman Empire written after Tacitus, whose work he continued. His writing is rhetorically skillful and contains some showpieces. But we should never have been able to infer that he declaimed at least some parts of his history before a Roman audience if he had not been congratulated on this by his fellow Antiochene Libanius in a letter of circa A.D. 392 (*Epist.* 11, 983 ed. Förster). The challenge to identify the passages Ammianus chose for his own readings remains open.

Thus in the fourth century A.D. public readings from one's own historical work were still a recognized method of making it known. This explains why one way of honoring a historian was to have his books read by somebody else, either in the writer's lifetime or after his death. We are told in the Byzantine encyclopedia known as *Suda*, under the name of Dicaearchus, that the Spartans were so pleased with Dicaearchus's description of the Spartan constitution (third century B.C.) that they had it read in public once a year. How long the custom lasted we do not know. While the Emperor Claudius was alive, his books in Greek on Etruscan and Carthaginian history were read at stated dates in the two museums of Alexandria—some compensation for a man whose own performances had been such a fiasco.

In comparison, the evidence about Herodotus' lectures is far less reassuring. The most precise account is in Lucian (*On Herodotus*, 1), who wrote almost six centuries after Herodotus' death. There we find the story of the successful lectures given by Herodotus at Olympia. Listeners were so pleased that they gave the names of the Nine Muses to Herodotus' nine books. The so-called *Suda* adds that Thucydides was in the audience and was inspired to write history, too. Other Greek writers of the early second century A.D. had, or believed they had, information about Herodotus' lectures. Dio Chrysostom says that Herodotus wanted money from Corinth (*Oration*, 37, 103), and Plutarch, less assuredly, thinks he knows that Herodotus asked for money from Thebes when he lectured there. When he did not get it, he became hostile to the Boeo-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tians, an attitude that the Boeotian Plutarch cannot forgive: it inspired his curious pamphlet *On Herodotus' Malice* (cf. especially 31).

Such stories receive little support from Herodotus' own text. He speaks of his journeys and tells us, for instance, that in Sparta he was something of a guest of Archias of Pitane (3, 55), but never alludes to public lectures. The good men of Olympia cannot have had anything to do with the division of Herodotus' work into nine books, which is almost certainly Hellenistic (third century B.C.?) and not fifth century. It has also been said that the structure of the work, its natural organization in *logoi*, or stories, implies public lectures. Yet nobody has so far succeeded in identifying the individual lectures within the text of Herodotus. We are therefore left with only one serious argument. In his Chronicle for the year 445 B.C., Eusebius of Caesarea (early fourth century A.D.) states definitely that the council of Athens gave Herodotus a prize (unspecified) after having heard his work. Paradoxically, Eusebius's evidence would appear entirely convincing if it were not supported by an earlier and more explicit piece of evidence. According to Plutarch (*On Herodotus Malice*, 26), the third-century B.C. Anthenian historian Diyllus reported that the Athenians gave Herodotus a prize of ten talents when Anytus was secretary of the council. Diyllus does not seem to have explained why Herodotus got such a sum. If the sum was a prize for a literary work, it was enormous. Pindar is said, by the well-informed Isocrates (*About the Exchange*, 166), to have received ten thousand drachmas—that is, less than two talents—for his poem in honor of Athens. Tertullian read somewhere that the historian Clidemus got a golden crown for having written a history of Attica (*On the Soul*, 52, according to the most probable emendation). The crown was certainly worth less than Pindar's prize. As one drachma was the daily wage of a worker, Herodotus would have received enough to enable him to eat for 60,000 days—that is, for about 167 years. The least we can say is that either Herodotus' prize included expenses of a kind we cannot even imagine, or the figure of ten talents is likely to be wrong.

In Herodotus' text we can, at best, find passages that are more meaningful if we take them to have been read before an Athenian audience, or at least written with Athenian readers in mind. For instance, the famous passage that plays a great part in any discussion on matriarchy: "Ask a Lycian who he is, and he answers by giving his own name, that of his mother, and so on in the female line. Moreover if a free woman marries a man who is a slave, their children are full citizens, but if a free man marries a foreign woman, or lives with a concubine, even though he be the first citizen in the State, the children forfeit all the rights of citizenship" (I, 173, transl. G. Rawlinson). At this point an

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Athenian reader or listener would certainly have remembered that Pericles' son by Aspasia, a foreign concubine, was born illegitimate. But would Herodotus have written differently if he had had another audience in mind—or (as may be the case with writers) had no specific audience in mind?

As is by now clear, I do not include in the evidence for Herodotus' public readings what Thucydides says about himself in I, 22: "To hear this history rehearsed, for that there be inserted in it no fables, shall be perhaps not delightful . . . it is compiled rather for an everlasting possession than to be rehearsed for a prize" (transl. Th. Hobbes: cf. I, 21, "more delightfully to the ear, than conformably to the truth"). Thucydides may indeed be polemically contrasting himself with Herodotus in the matter of public readings, but his words are not explicit in this sense. At best he is ambiguous. Only if we are independently certain that Herodotus performed public lectures of his works may we look for a confirmation of this in Thucydides. He is reticent even about his own work; he neither excludes nor confirms that it was read or likely to be read in public. He chiefly wants to express his conviction that a good history is a history future generations will read for their own instruction. As he owned mines in Thrace (4, 105, 1), he was perhaps spared the necessity of making money from literary work. Similarly, an estate at Scyllus near Olympia, given by Sparta, may have saved his continuator Xenophon, again an Athenian and again an exile, from the necessity of lecturing (cf. *Anabasis* 5, 3, 6). But being free of the need for money does not necessarily entail disinclination to try out one's own work in friendly surroundings before putting it in the hands of extraneous readers. We simply do not know whether Thucydides, Xenophon, and, for that matter, the other eminent historians of the fourth century B.C. (Ephorus, Theopompus) ever read their works in front of an audience.

III

It is evident, however, that public readings represent only a minor aspect of the complex and obscure relationship between the Greek and Roman historians and their public. The other aspects have never been systematically analyzed; indeed the evidence has never been systematically collected, although much of it is to be found in the edition of the fragments of Greek historians by F. Jacoby and in the vastly inferior Roman counterpart by H. Peter. Therefore, in seminars that I have been running at the University of Chicago, the idea has been formulated of collecting and commenting on this evidence and, if possible, deriving from it some precise conclusion about the position of the historian in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Greek and Roman society. Comparison with the position of historians in other societies, either ancient (for instance, Hebrew society) or medieval, would naturally be helped by such work. It is too early to say whether this idea will materialize. The only work about which one can make some promise is the work already done. But it is not too early to indicate with a few random examples some of the types of evidence one would have to collect:

1. We know of specific readers of historical books. Lucian (*Against the Ignorant Book-collector*, 4) tells us that Demosthenes copied Thucydides eight times—tradition or invention? Brutus worked on a summary of Polybius on the eve of the battle of Pharsalus (Plutarch, *Life of Brutus*, 4, 4). The Emperor Claudius was a keen reader and imitator of Livy, whom he had known and by whom he had been encouraged (Suetonius, *Life of Claudius*, 41). And of course there were summaries (epitomes) of historical works for general (not just for the compiler's) consumption, such as Theopompus' lost summary of Herodotus and the extant summary of Trogus Pompeius (first century B.C.) by Justin (second century A.D.). They testify to the popularity of certain authors, but at the same time indicate the need for adjusting the contents of their works to the requirements of new categories of readers.

We also know of certain buyers of certain books, which does not prove that the buyer read the book. Plutarch (*Life of Alexander*, 8) tells us that Harpalus bought for Alexander the Great several books, among which was the history by the Sicilian Philistus—not everybody's taste, but Philistus may have been a relative novelty in metropolitan Greece about 330 B.C.

2. Another aspect is the availability of historical books. Without Aulus Gellius (*Attic Nights*, 5, 4, 1) we should never have known that a Latin version of Fabius Pictor's Greek annals (the oldest book written by a Roman for a Greek-reading public at the end of the third century B.C.) was still available on the market in the second century A.D. The Roman bookseller claimed that his copy was free of errors. This reminds us that Roman books had not always had the reputation of being sold in good copies: Cicero once complained to his brother Quintus, "I do not know where to turn for Latin books, so bad are the copies for sale" (*Ep. to his brother Quintus*, 3, 5, 6; cf. Strabo, XIII, 609). Public libraries were meant to satisfy the need for reliable copies of important works, including histories. A by-now famous inscription discovered at Taormina in Sicily, in 1969, showed that in the second century B.C. works of historians such as Callisthenes, Philistus, and Fabius Pictor were available in a local library; that library seems to have specialized in history (text in *Parola del Passato* 29, 1974, 389–409). It is remarkable that, with such libraries

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on his native soil, the Sicilian Diodorus should have found it difficult to obtain historical books in Sicily in the first century B.C. He apparently consulted books in Rome and Alexandria, but they may have been specialized literature (I, 3, 8 and 4, 3; III, 38, 1).

One of the ways of knowing which histories were available at a given time, if not at a given place, is, of course, to examine quotations in later histories, but quotations are often secondhand and therefore misleading. Furthermore, the ancient habit of quoting in order to blame, rather than praise, limits the statistical value of this type of evidence, though it makes it more interesting from another point of view. Papyri, as is well known, have offered the possibility of some more precise quantitative appreciation of the popularity of Greek historical books in Egypt—or, to be more exact, in those small Egyptian towns where papyri are found (what people read in Alexandria is more difficult to discover than what was read in Oxyrhynchus). It is something to know that Thucydides appears to have been read as much as Pindar, Herodotus as much as his friend Sophocles. Finally, there is evidence of the revision of historical texts in the late Roman Empire, as part of the effort to keep classics alive in a society in which, for unclear reasons, the book market was shrinking. This is famous evidence, almost all derived from subscriptions in manuscripts, mentioning the names of those who read or revised the texts. It is evidence perhaps less easy to interpret than is often assumed. What was it in the early sixth century A.D. that led Flavius Licerius Firminus Lupicinus, apparently a nephew of Bishop Ennodius of Pavia, to "read" precisely the text of Caesar's *Gallic War* (cf. Ennodius, *Ep.* 69 ed. Vogel and elsewhere)?

3. The relation between the historians and the rulers of their time or of later times is easier to grasp. I believe a distinction must be made between Roman and pre-Roman conditions. In Rome the relationship between historiography and government seems always to have been closer than in Greece. For centuries the Romans kept going an official chronicle (*annales maximi*), compiled by the pontiffs. What this chronicle contained, how it was compiled, when it started, how and when it was finally closed down and divulged outside the ruling class are all famous questions to which there is no undisputed answer. What matters here is that there was in Rome a presumption of official interest in historiography that was not so obvious in Greece. As I have already pointed out, in Greece the rejected politicians—that is, the exiles—formed the most conspicuous contingent of historiographers, whereas in Rome accepted members of the ruling class were frequently its historians. This endowed historians in Rome with a halo of authority, which Pliny the Younger recognized in his friend Tacitus (*Letters* 7, 20; 9, 14,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and 23), but not perhaps in Suetonius, a mere knight. One of the consequences was that a historian was more easily and more sharply persecuted in Rome if he criticized those whom he was expected to support. In Greece one became a historian because one was exiled; in Rome one could easily be exiled—or worse—because one was a historian. The monarchic regime introduced by Augustus soon came to distrust and to punish those historians who did not toe the line. No doubt Callisthenes, whom Alexander the Great had picked up as his own historian, was killed by his master, but not for what he wrote; he was accused of being involved in a conspiracy. Even under Augustus, the historian Timagenes lost imperial favor on account of what he said rather than what he wrote (Seneca, *Controv.* 10, 5, 21; Seneca the Younger, *On Wrath*, 3, 23). But under Tiberius the historical books by Cremutius Cordus, a senator, were burned in public, and the author was driven to suicide (Tacitus, *Annals*, 4, 35; Suetonius, *Tiberius*, 61, 3; Dio Cassius, 57, 24). The burning of books was, generally speaking, a Roman peculiarity. It is symptomatic that Caligula, Tiberius's successor, encouraged the reappearance in circulation of Cremutius's burned books (Suet. *Caligula* 16). The situation became even worse under Domitian, when Hermogenes, an otherwise unknown historian from Tarsus, was killed together with his scribes for writing things the emperor did not like (Suet. *Domitian* 10, 1). This may partly explain the precautions taken by Flavius Josephus to have his books on the Jewish War protected and authenticated by the emperor against possible accusations. But I do not entirely understand the story in Josephus's *Autobiography* (363) that Titus affixed his seal to Josephus's history of the Jewish War; Titus would also have ordered the publication of the text. I know of only one exact parallel to this strange story: the statement in *St. Paul's Apocalypse*, a work of the early fifth century, that the Emperor Theodosius II declared the text authentic and sent the original (or, according to a variant, a copy) to be preserved in Jerusalem. The same state of mind led the ecclesiastical historian Sozomenus to submit his text to Theodosius II and to ask him to add or delete at his own discretion.

In these Jewish and Christian utterances there may well be a component of Jewish origin superimposed on the Roman imperial situation. Jews and Christians were used to sacred books, and the idea of an official text prepared in the Temple of Jerusalem and spread from there was current in the Hellenistic period. The Second Book of Maccabees, in its present form, is accompanied by official letters (the authenticity of which does not concern us here) from the Jerusalem authorities to the leaders of the Egyptian Jews. The Greek translation of the Book of Esther also seems to have been officially sent from Jerusalem to Egypt.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

4. Some historians may indeed have been the equivalents of what we call official historians, though the notion and terminology will have to be carefully defined. The compilers of the Macedonian court diaries (which seem to have existed) are not to be confused with the historians who followed the expedition of Alexander. Fabius Pictor and Philinus are often treated as if they had been, respectively, the official Roman and the official Carthaginian historian of the first Punic War, but Polybius, who characterizes them, never implies this. One can hardly see how that designation could apply to a Roman aristocrat of the third century B.C. like Fabius. But even Philinus, a Sicilian Greek, who sided with the Carthaginians, was not the mouthpiece of a political organization. The position of Silenus and of the Spartan Sosylus, who followed Hannibal (Cornelius Nepos, *Life of Hannibal*, 13, 3), is different. They acted as his official historians. Polybius himself went to the siege of Carthage (though perhaps not to the siege of Numantia) as a privileged historian accompanying the Roman commander. Official or semiofficial accounts of military campaigns were not uncommon under the emperors, but Lucian does not complain about them when, in his *How to Write History*, he gives his unflattering account of the historians who told lies about Marcus Aurelius's war against the Parthians in order to gain favor.

5. Historians, like other famous men, could give their birthplace a reputation in the imperial age (Herodotus was portrayed on Halicarnassian coins) and sometimes actually helped their fellow citizens. Mytilene owed her freedom to Theophanes, the historian and friend of Pompey, and consequently engraved his image as a divinized being on her coins (see the admirable paper by L. Robert in *Comptes Rendus: Académie des Inscriptions*, 1969, 42–64). Needless to say, historians were used in controversies between cities, and in cases of arbitration they served as legal arguments (or witnesses from the past) to prove rights of ownership. The legal use of historians is a characteristic feature of city life in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, as inscriptions show (for instance, *Inschriften von Priene*, No. 37).

6. The Greeks apparently never translated historical works from other languages as long as they remained independent, but they encouraged foreigners to write in Greek the history of their respective countries. The oldest example we have belongs to the fifth century B.C.: the Lydian Xanthus wrote about the Lydians in Greek. The custom became widespread after Alexander the Great, and some of the early Roman historians wrote in Greek, though they were outside the sphere of influence of the Hellenistic monarchs. Translation of Greek histories into Latin was, as a rule, unnecessary, since educated Romans read Greek prose without difficulty. But we shall have to consider the compilations of foreign

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

histories encouraged by the Roman ruling class, such as those prepared by Alexander Polyhistor, a Greek freedman, at Rome or near Rome in the first century B.C. It is characteristic that these compilations were written in Greek, not in Latin. In the late Roman Empire the situation changed. The Latin historical summary of Eutropius was twice translated into Greek. Eusebius's *Chronicon* was translated into Latin by St. Jerome, but chronological compendia had, even earlier, a special story of transmission from one language into another. A Latin text based on Josephus's *Jewish War* was prepared in mysterious circumstances in the fourth century A.D. Translation into Latin of Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities* had to wait until about A.D. 570, when one was produced in the circle of Cassiodorus in the monastery of Vivarium. What is obvious is that this sudden surge of translations in late antiquity is inseparable from the new Jewish-Christian climate. The Jews had been the first to make available their historical books (that is, the Bible) by translation into Greek. Translation into Latin followed.

7. Biography is a genre by itself, in antiquity as in modern times. The questions about its genesis and development inevitably imply questions about purpose, readers, and social boundaries. With some of these questions I have dealt elsewhere (*The Development of Greek Biography*, Harvard, 1971). Purpose can vary from personal encomium to philosophic analysis of a specific type of human life. Readers may be sought out for political or religious or philosophic proselytism. When biography becomes autobiography (and there are intermediate states, such as one's own biography written by one's own freedman or relative) self-defense or political propaganda may be paramount. And finally there is the extraordinary transformation of biography brought about by the notion of sanctity in the Christian churches. Though we still tend to believe that no life is like another life, ancient biographers—whether pagan or Christian—did not share our delusion. They modeled somebody's biography upon somebody else's biography. The diffusion of biography is at least partly a story of the various fortunes of prototypes: Socrates, Alexander, St. Anthony, Brutus. Biography is perhaps the historiographical genre in which the creation of religious, philosophic, political, and social bonds between writer and reader is most consciously pursued and most easily achieved. The subject of philosophic or religious conversion through biography is worth a chapter of its own.

8. We shall still have to consult books of rhetoric to explain why and how historical examples were useful. We shall of course have to look at the books of examples themselves, whether Latin or Greek (Valerius Maximus, Aelianus), whether technical (Frontinus and Polyaenus on stratagems) or frivolous ("marvelous stories" of various kinds), to see

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

how selection effectively operated. And we would have to examine the anthologies that make historians available to specific groups of readers. Polybius is the most spectacular example of a historian cut to pieces to suit the needs of generals, orators, and diplomats who did not want to read the whole work. But Polybius was dismembered by Byzantine scholars in the tenth century.

IV

The collection of evidence outlined here, if provided with a proper commentary, would help us to understand where and on what occasions and by what kinds of people books of history were written and read. It would tell us something about the circulation of ideas and would indicate situations in which history became dangerous or pointed to radical transformation. It would give us some more precise information about the uses of history.

Perhaps there is no need to add that such a collection would never give us an exhaustive explanation of the twin questions of why people wrote *and* read (or listened to) history. Such questions cannot be entirely answered by collecting evidence on historians and their readers. They cannot even be entirely answered by reading and rereading the actual texts of the historians themselves—a duty that the projected collection does not intend to make lighter. The evidence of what happened to historical books and their authors can, however, help to explain why history existed in societies for which history was not a part of ordinary education and in which religion, philosophy, and custom determined conduct without having to pass through historical books.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bureaucracy Baiting

STEPHEN MILLER

DURING THE PAST TWENTY YEARS bureaucracy has come to stand for all that is wrong with the modern world. Bureaucracy is both a monstrous growth that threatens to strangle liberal democracy and a sinister force that undermines the attempt to achieve social justice. It is also the chief abettor of inefficiency, impersonality, alienation, and oppression. Sometimes even war. Thus a well-known American columnist laid the blame for American deaths in Vietnam on the altar of the military bureaucracy. From late-capitalist United States to post-Maoist China, the antibureaucracy liturgy sounds surprisingly the same: bureaucracy goes against the will of the people, for bureaucrats are masters of obfuscation, manipulation, deceit, and delay. They are held in such low esteem that the author of a recent scholarly study of the subject felt obliged to tell his readers that "bureaucrats, whether Foreign Service officers, Civil Service employees, or members of the armed services, are human beings. . . ."

These attacks should give us pause, suggesting as they do not only the level to which the reputation of bureaucracies has sunk but also the loose ways in which the notion of bureaucracy is employed. Many writers, it seems, have abandoned their minds to denunciations of bureaucracy, apparently less interested in seeing how bureaucracy can best be contained than in bewailing its very existence. To give some idea of the way in which the term is used, consider the following remark by Ronald Steel in *The New York Review of Books:* "Rule by a privileged class of bureaucrats has come to be a condition of social life." In lamenting the widespread existence of what he calls "privileged bureaucracies," Steel alludes to the state of affairs in countries as far-flung and as politically various as China, Egypt, Peru, and Algeria, to name only a few of several that he mentions. No doubt if we, as Samuel Johnson put it, "survey[ed] mankind from China to Peru," we would find privileged bureaucracies everywhere. Yet to say this is to say very little about the ways in which bureaucracies operate in different countries—and nothing about whether the bureaucracy in a particular coun-

STEPHEN MILLER's writing has appeared in *Commentary*, *Encounter*, the *American Spectator*, and other journals.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

try makes life irritating or intolerable. Invoking the dread god Bureaucracy, Steel merely made the banal observation that all countries have ruling elites that are reluctant to give up power and its attendant privileges.

Of course the growth of bureaucracy should be attacked, but bureaucracy should not be made to serve as the whipping boy for all manner of modern evils. Such slipshod condemnations make it all the more difficult to combat effectively the expansion of bureaucracy, for they poison the intellectual atmosphere, creating a climate of nihilistic despair about the forces at work in modern societies. Moreover, bureaucracy baiters do not keep in mind that antibureaucratic movements often have been bent on undoing liberal democracy altogether—of course while fervently championing the will of the people. Simon Leys, in his recent book *Chinese Shadows*, reminds us of the fanaticism that colors antibureaucratic movements; he speaks of the Blue Shirts of the cultural revolution, who declared war against corrupt bureaucrats and argued in one of their periodicals that " 'the only way to get rid of the bureaucratic organization is to create a mass-violence organization, taking the people as its supreme principle.' " We need, then, to sort out the legitimate criticisms of bureaucracy from the unwarranted ones.

The man chiefly responsible for promoting the notion of bureaucratization was Max Weber, who bestrides the conceptual world of bureaucracy like a colossus. The literature on bureaucracies can be traced back to ancient China, but most writers on the subject rarely look past Weber. In brief, Weber argued that modern organizations are different from their forerunners in that they embody "rational" rather than "patrimonial" forms of administration. By the rational administration of large-scale organizations, an idea that lies at the heart of his notion of bureaucratization, Weber was referring not only to the procedural features of this mode of administration but also to the way officials were recruited, and thus the changes in their relation to their work. Weber realized that large-scale organizations have always existed, but he argued that the rational administration of such organizations is a distinctly modern phenomenon, the result of complex historical forces that can be subsumed under the notion of bureaucratization. As he said, "The increasing demands of administration rest on the increasing complexity of civilization and push toward bureaucratization."

Weber, however, was not always neutral about the transformation he was at pains to describe. In a much-quoted speech he railed against what he thought were the negative aspects of this transformation: the rise of what he called Bureaucratic Man, a half-man who would slavishly worship rules, never asserting his will or acting out of the dictates of his conscience.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It is horrible to think that the world could one day be filled with nothing but those little cogs, little men clinging to their jobs and striving towards bigger ones—a state of affairs which is to be seen once more as . . . playing an ever-increasing part in the spirit of our present administrative system. . . . That the world should know no men but these: it is in such an evolution that we are already caught up, and the great question is therefore not how we can promote and hasten it but what can we oppose to this machinery in order to keep a portion of mankind free from this parcelling-out of the soul, from this supreme mastery of the bureaucratic way of life.

Weber's view of bureaucratization was far more complex and balanced than this shrill speech indicates, but unfortunately many intellectuals have appropriated his words not only to give a distorted view of Weber's attitude toward bureaucratization but also to make it serve as a jumping-off point for a sweeping indictment of modern society. In the minds of many post-Weberians, bureaucratization functions as an iron law of disenchantment, transforming society into a web of vast, impersonal organizations, and the state into a cruel leviathan.

One such cruel leviathan was, of course, Nazi Germany, and some writers have singled out bureaucratization as the key to the evils of that period. Henry Jacoby, in *The Bureaucratization of the World* (published in Germany in 1969 and recently translated into English), relies heavily on Weber's prediction of the rise of bureaucratic man—even quoting from that famous speech. According to Jacoby, Weber's prophecy was fulfilled in the Nazi state—a line of thought that enables him to point with significance at "the bookkeeping records of a certain totalitarian state [that] duly noted the number of gold teeth extracted from those it had murdered." The point is accurate, but the conclusion Jacoby wrenches from it is misguided. It may be that the routine administration of murder is more horrible to contemplate than the massacres of barbarian hordes, but Jews and Gypsies were murdered because the "final solution" was the chief item on the Nazi agenda, *not* because Germany was knee-deep in bureaucratization. Several historians have shown that, although the German administrative elite survived the changeover to the Nazis virtually intact, their influence was relatively unimportant compared with their influence during the Weimar period. The Nazis made sure that the administrative elite danced to their tune. As Ralf Dahrendorf has said: "In the first months of his [Hitler's] rule, he enacted the laws and created the institutions that were needed to 'co-ordinate' the bureaucracy and the legal system. This meant that he wanted to subject them to his rule."

The point is well known, yet Jacoby is so enchanted with Weber's gloomy prophecy that he has trouble paying attention to the obvious. Looking at Nazi Germany, Jacoby wants to find general laws that explain

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the horrifying particulars; and so he says that "what one has to consider apparently is that totalitarian states are not accidental manifestations, but rather extreme symptoms of a world-wide tendency." One would expect, then, that the most advanced states would be those where totalitarianism flourishes. The United States is, by any account, an advanced state, and one in which the federal bureaucracy grew at an extraordinary rate in the twenty-five years after World War II. But this growth resulted from legislative acts and judicial decisions that relied on the Constitution for their authority; and the Constitution, we might say, is a legitimizing "myth" that does not—to put it mildly—bear the least resemblance to *Mein Kampf*, the legitimizing "myth" behind Nazi Germany.

Any explanation of Nazi Germany, then, cannot rely heavily on the notion of bureaucratization; yet that is just what Hannah Arendt relies on to explain Eichmann—and, by implication, other major Nazi functionaries—in her controversial study of the Eichmann trial, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. Most of the controversy centered on her allegations about the Jewish community's cooperation—indeed, she argued collusion—in its own destruction. Little was said, however, about the confusions inherent in Arendt's peculiar phrase, "the banality of evil," which appears to have attained the status of a Homeric epithet in the world of intellectual journalism, so that banality and evil are forever yoked together. And little was said about Arendt's general thesis—more evident in the book's postscript than in the main body—about the bureaucratization of evil, a thesis that follows Jacoby's line about the relationship of bureaucratization to totalitarianism.

Arendt, like Jacoby, was very much influenced by Max Weber. She called him "the only historian who raised the question of the modern age with the depth and relevance corresponding to its importance." She saw that age as being increasingly tarnished by bureaucratization; but unlike Weber, she thought that bureaucracy constituted a category of government, a particular kind of polity and not merely a form of administrative organization. In *The Human Condition*, which remains the key to her thought, she says: "As we know from the most social form of government, that is, from bureaucracy, . . . the rule by nobody is not necessarily no-rule; it may indeed, under certain circumstances, even turn out to be one of its cruelest and most tyrannical versions." For Arendt, the drift of most governments in the direction of "rule by nobody" is a worldwide tendency; it is the most significant phenomenon of the modern age, and Eichmann himself is a characteristic example of those who flourish in such a polity. Eichmann, Arendt says, was simply a bureaucratic opportunist—someone who was only "looking out for his personal advancement," who "*never realized what he was doing*" (emphasis in the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

original). For Arendt, the distinctive characteristic of Eichmann was the bureaucratic mentality.

In making Eichmann into a bureaucrat, Arendt painted a portrait exactly like the one Eichmann tried to paint of himself when on trial in Israel. Eichmann kept denying that he was a subscriber to the Nazi faith; he was only, so he said, a "good German," who obeyed his superiors and carried out orders. Yet many historians have made it clear that Eichmann's self-serving description of himself was far from accurate. He was a true-believing Nazi, one who showed a distinctly unbureaucratic zeal at times, undertaking to liquidate Hungarian Jews against Himmler's orders. According to Bernard Schwartz, "there were no doubt many 'jobholders' among the hordes of Nazi functionaries . . . [but] there were also probably many deeply imbued with Nazi convictions, profoundly interested in achieving honor, glory, and earthly immortality, and even displaying individual initiative in serving their cause." Eichmann, it is clear, was one of the latter; no matter how burned-out, pathetic, and ludicrous he may have appeared when on trial, he had once been a powerful Nazi.

Eichmann's line of defense at the trial, I suspect, probably went against his deepest convictions, lowering himself in his own regard. For he must have been immensely proud of his days as a Nazi, having joined the Party because its intoxicating doctrine enabled him to see himself as a heroic warrior, a member of the *Volk*, a descendant of those mighty Aryan tribes that defied the Romans and their refined gods just as the Nazis defied the rationalism of French civilization. As a Nazi, Eichmann probably saw himself as an enemy of bureaucratization, a foreign disease that should not be allowed to infect Germany. Although no doubt Eichmann was a good administrator, when Arendt says that he was simply a bureaucratic opportunist, she completely fails to understand the emotions that swayed such a man and thousands like him. During the Nazi period, the state bureaucracy expanded enormously, but we should keep in mind that the Nazis gained converts by preaching against bureaucratization—preaching against all the soulless "rational" forces that were destroying what they thought were the ancient virtues of the German race.

If some writers have pointed to bureaucratization as the key to Nazi totalitarianism, a host of contemporary novelists have spoken of bureaucratization as the disease that pervades all advanced industrial societies. In the novels and stories of Thomas Pynchon, Joseph Heller, Donald Barthelme, John Barth, Kurt Vonnegut, and Robert Coover—to name only the most prominent—the world is a place of proliferating bureaucratic structures that make for banality, confusion, meaninglessness, and terror. These novelists see themselves, by and large, as satirical writers,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but the atmosphere of their work is clouded by sociopolitical and metaphysical gloom. I say metaphysical, for the rise of bureaucratic man also serves as evidence to support what can only be called a Manichaean view of the world.

Such a world view has its literary origin in the work of Franz Kafka. His novels, tales, and parables have given us the adjective Kafkaesque, which describes situations that smack of bureaucratic delay, obfuscation, oppression, and nightmare—situations, moreover, that are totally drained of meaning. Kafka's oeuvre is notoriously difficult to interpret, yet we can safely say that many of his best works center on a character who has, in some way or other, become a victim of a mysterious "higher" power—one that usually makes its presence felt in the person of a public official.

Perhaps Kafka's prototypical tale is his three-page masterpiece "Before the Law." No summary can do justice to its peculiar blend of mystery, terror, and, to my mind, humor. It is the story of a man who goes to seek "the Law" but is prevented from doing so by a doorkeeper, who warns him that it is useless to try to get past him, for there is—seemingly—an unending number of doorkeepers who will also block his way. The man has not expected such difficulties; "the Law, he thinks, should surely be accessible at all times to everyone. . . ." Despite the doorkeeper's warning, he decides to stay and wait, remaining for days, then years, yet never gaining entry. Finally, at the edge of death, he asks the doorkeeper a question that has been troubling him for some time. " 'Everyone,' " he says, " 'strives to reach the Law . . . so how does it happen that for all these many years no one but myself has ever begged for admittance?' " In response, the doorkeeper shouts into the dying man's ear: " 'No one else could ever be admitted here, since this gate was made only for you. I am now going to shut it.' "

It is easy to see how this tale could be interpreted as a parable about man versus the state. The twentieth century abounds in such Kafkaesque situations—situations in which individuals have, at the very least, been treated by government officials with a mixture of indifference and scorn; situations that make no sense or only a perverse kind of sense. But to enlist Kafka in the army of bureaucracy baiters is to forget that Kafka was essentially a writer who was less interested in social and political realities than in the spiritual status of man. "Sometimes I feel I understand the Fall of Man better than anyone," he said. Preoccupied—one might even say obsessed—with what he considered to be man's craving for spiritual truth, Kafka also suffered from the conviction that such truth, if it existed at all, was unattainable for us, living as we do in a world radically divorced from the world of the spirit. Because Kafka has one story only, it matters little where a particular story is set or what a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

particular character is like (Auden called the typical Kafka character an "I without a self"), although of course some settings are more compelling than others because they manage to convey this spiritual anguish and terror more effectively. Yet in all of Kafka's work the setting suffers from an oppressive lack of meaning—and is of no help, moreover, to the central character, who seeks but shall not find. As Kafka himself says in one of his terrifyingly Manichaean remarks, "There is only a spiritual world; what we call the physical world is the evil in the spiritual one." Even though much of his work has to do with the sinister and comic aspects of "official" behavior, a Kafkaesque situation is really one of ontological despair rather than bureaucratic confusion.

We should be wary, then, of pulling sociological or political meanings from the frozen and claustrophobic world that Kafka has created. And we should be wary of making easy equations between Kafka's world and the world of totalitarian regimes. Far from being oppressively meaningless, the world of Nazi Germany was positively and abhorrently drenched with meaning, which became all too clear to Jews, Gypsies, Poles, and others, even though, by the lights of a recent revisionist account, this meaning was not known to Hitler himself. In Kafka's world what happens to the central character is usually puzzling in the extreme, whereas the victims of the Nazis knew exactly why they were being persecuted.

Kafka makes more sense as a guide to life in Stalin's Russia, since it is clear from a reading of Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Nadezhda Mandelstam that, while meaning informed this world in the guise of Marxism-Leninism, such principles were often of little help as guides for survival; even devout Marxist-Leninists as well as true believers in Stalin were sent to forced labor camps. Among the many Kafkaesque situations—if we still want to use that phrase—that one finds in *The Gulag Archipelago*, the following is deservedly one of the most famous. A chief of convoy asks a new prisoner the reason for his twenty-five-year sentence, to which the prisoner replies that he was sentenced for nothing at all. The chief of convoy is extremely incensed about this answer, and he says to the prisoner: " 'You're lying. *The sentence for nothing at all is ten years*' " (emphasis in the original). Surely we have come upon a world drained of meaning, but the meaninglessness here is political, and as such it has little in common with the metaphysical meaninglessness that pervades Kafka's work. Kafka's world is essentially ahistorical, his characters bearing a burden that would remain the same whether they lived in the Russia of Stalin or the United States of Franklin Roosevelt.

Powerful works of the imagination, however, possess a life of their own—one that often has little to do with the intentions of their authors. Properly understood or not, Kafka's works have made him the patron

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

saint of many contemporary American novelists, who are Manichaean less in their search for the light than in their strong sense of the surrounding darkness—the desolation and meaninglessness of advanced industrial societies. In the work of Pynchon, Heller, Barthelme, Barth, Vonnegut, and Coover, Kafka's metaphysical disgust modulates into a sociopolitical disgust with the nature of life in the modern world, in which all modern polities, by virtue of their bureaucratic structures, are more alike than different.

In Heller's *Catch-22* and Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*, for example, the reigning assumption is that there was little difference between Allied and Axis powers in World War II; each side had its share of bureaucratic terror and confusion. As Robert Alter has pointed out, for all the historical detail that clots these novels, there is a sense in which they lack any truly historical grasp of events; bureaucratization dominates the landscape, enabling the writer to indulge in wild, satirical fantasies without making important distinctions between different kinds of bureaucratized polities. In fact, the characters who do attempt to make such distinctions are treated either as hypocrites or as fools.

Novelists, of course, should not be criticized for being weak political theorists, but when novels come dressed in the clothes of historical recreation the critic has a right to ask what exactly is being said about the historical period that is imagined. And it is not enough to deflect such questions by arguing that the novelist is only borrowing the materials of history to construct an imagined world, one that has no relation to the real world. In any case, the notion that modern societies are, for the most part, madhouses where confusion and oppression reign is a lazy man's wisdom that enables writers to avoid the hard task of making distinctions not only about different societies but about different persons as well. In many contemporary novels, it seems, the writer has first postulated meaninglessness and then has tried to conjure up imaginative manifestations of meaninglessness; the mind slumbers while the imagination runs riot.

Looking at the predictably absurd situations that fill the pages of these novels, it seems as if the writers are interested in the discontents of bureaucratization only insofar as these serve as another melody in their tone poems about modern life. By now the melodies are well known: the mindlessness of mass man, the soulless nature of modern life, the emptiness of a materialistic culture. Intellectuals and writers, of course, do not exhibit these characteristics, nor do the very poor. But as soon as the poor become less poor—become, say, lower middle class—they are disdained as spiritually inferior persons, as mass men. According to Mary McCarthy, Eichmann was not horrible simply because he was a fervent Nazi; he was horrible because he was an ordinary, petit bourgeois functionary.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"What is horrible about Eichmann," she says in a defense of Hannah Arendt's book, "*is* his ordinariness." And what, for Miss McCarthy, constitutes his ordinariness? "Among his fellow bureaucrats," she says, "he might have passed highest in a vocational aptitude test for the new job." At this level, criticism of bureaucrats and bureaucracies is but a mask that hides the snobbish contempt of many intellectuals for so-called mass man, who is soulless, materialistic, and infected by the bureaucratic spirit which, according to Jacoby, "dehumanizes society because it leads to the complete alienation of man from his own social existence." This kind of thinking tells us very little about an Eichmann; it also tells us very little about what life was like in a bureaucratized state like Nazi Germany—or, for that matter, what life is like in a bureaucratized state like contemporary Sweden. Although intellectuals who wring their hands over mass man often cite Weber's speech about bureaucratic man, Weber would not have accepted the notion that bureaucratization was inherently an evil phenomenon, nor would he have agreed with the idea that bureaucratization is one of the many evils that the modern world has visited upon society. Just as Weber was very critical of what Edward Shils has called the *Gemeinschaft Schwärmerei* of many German writers during the first two decades of the twentieth century, he surely would have been critical of what we might call the wasteland *Schwärmerei* of many contemporary novelists and intellectuals.

II

The world view peddled by the writers I have mentioned is commonplace only in the West. The Russian and East European writers we have come to admire sing no such one-dimensional refrain about advanced industrial society. Bureaucratization, they realize, may be pervasive, but they much prefer the brand for sale in the West to the kind available in the Soviet Union and its satellites. They rarely indulge in such indiscriminate attacks because they know, as Weber knew, that politics should lie at the center of all discussions about the evils of bureaucracy; for bureaucracies are most fearsome when they operate in a political vacuum—that is, in polities where they are virtually immune from public criticism and control. In such polities, not only is there no public debate about the nature and effectiveness of their programs, but there is no recourse when one is subjected to their unjust or pernicious activities.

As Leszek Kolakowski (a Polish émigré) has said, in totalitarian states no such countervailing efforts are possible because one of the salient features of such polities "is the abrogation of Law—not necessarily in the sense of rules or procedures in public matters but in the sense of a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

device which mediates between the individual and the state, and thus limits the state's power." Whatever we say about the confusions and injustices of the American federal bureaucracy, American "Law" gives the citizens of the United States some room to maneuver against the encroachments of the bureaucracy; the citizen of the Soviet Union has no such breathing space.

Weber, I think, would have agreed with the above remarks, for he argued that one first had to look at the particular structure of a polity before one could come to any conclusions about the scope and influence of its state bureaucracy. "One has to remember," he said, "that bureaucracy as such is a precision instrument that can put itself at the disposal of quite varied . . . interests in domination." According to Weber, a bureaucracy is any large-scale organization that has rationalized its administrative procedures; a bureaucracy is not, as some writers would have it, a form of government that is the opposite of democracy. This notion, which has its origin in John Stuart Mill, can be seen in Harold Laski's definition of bureaucracy as the "term usually applied to a system of government the control of which is so completely in the hands of officials that their power jeopardizes the liberties of ordinary citizens." We could say, following Laski, that some heavily bureaucratized polities are bureaucracies whereas others, equally bureaucratized, are not. To do so, however, makes for confusion—makes it easy to forget that the political question should be uppermost; that is, the officials of Laski's "bureaucracy" have so much power because no "Law," in Kolakowski's sense of the term, exists.

Though Weber was concerned about the expansion of the state bureaucracy in Germany, he had no quarrel with bureaucratization in itself. In fact, he welcomed this transformation as an essential aspect of economic modernization, arguing that it would tend to promote equality as well as efficiency. In welcoming such a change, Weber found himself opposed to an increasing number of German intellectuals who, as Kurt Sontheimer points out in his essay "Anti-Democratic Thought in the Weimar Republic," preached "against an extensively planned and mechanized environment, [and] against the inherent tendency of modern industrial society toward economic rationalization."And just as Weber recognized the need for a country's economy to become rationalized, he also recognized the need for a bureaucratized civil service. A civil service with specialized training, he said, "is an indispensable precondition for the knowledge of the technical means necessary to the achievement of political goals."

Nevertheless, Weber was uneasy about the bureaucratizing of the state's administration—not because, as we have seen, he thought bureaucrats were incompetent or evil, but rather because he was worried

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about the future of representative government in Germany. There the politician was generally regarded with disdain as someone who had to stoop to compete for votes in the political marketplace—someone, moreover, who had to change his ideas according to how he read the opinions of voters. The civil servant, on the other hand, was generally regarded as being above the political fray, and therefore could be relied upon to have an objective, impartial opinion about a question. Weber did not deny the virtues of the civil servant; but policy making, he said, "is not a technical affair, and hence not the business of the professional civil servant."

Weber implied that an excessive veneration of the civil servant, as well as the traditional German yearning for a so-called organic society based upon a consensus about goals, can only lead to the erosion of what Kolakowski called "Law." The essence of politics, Weber never tired of saying, is struggle; and in an important article, written at the close of World War I, Weber warned Germans of the consequences of their disdain for politicians. "To be above parties," he said, "in truth, to remain outside the realm of the struggle for power, is the official's role, while this struggle for personal power, and the resulting personal responsibility, is the lifeblood of the politician as well as the entrepreneur." Liberal democracy would inevitably be undermined if Germans did not recognize the need not only for political struggle but for politicians who, unlike civil servants, would take personal responsibility for their actions.

The need for effective representative government, Weber thought, was especially important because a bureaucratized state administration would continually try to resist public and parliamentary scrutiny. "Every bureaucracy," Weber said, "seeks to increase the superiority of the professionally informed by keeping their knowledge and intentions secret." Even a strong parliament, he suggested, would find it difficult to oversee effectively the work of the state bureaucracy. For one thing, although laws are authorized by the parliament, their detailed working out is done by the bureaucracy. The trained civil servant, therefore, can imply that he knows more about the law under review than the politician does. And the politician, faced with the need to assess innumerable pieces of legislation, usually has to take the civil servant's word on these matters—especially since the information he has requested in order to review a particular law has been supplied by the bureaucracy. Facing the trained official who has devoted himself to the management of a particular program, "the 'political master,' " Weber said, "finds himself in the position of the 'dilettante' who stands opposite the 'expert.' "

"The center cannot hold," says Yeats in a famous poem. Weber realized that representative government, which constitutes the "center" of liberal democracy, would have a hard time surviving the battering it

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would take from all sides of the German political spectrum. On the one hand, there were those Germans who resisted modernization, disdained political struggle, and yearned for a charismatic leader to restore the lost German *Gemeinschaft*. On the other hand, there were the socialists, who welcomed modernization but thought that the harshness of capitalist rationalization could be ameliorated only by an organized society with a cooperative economy. They, too, were impatient with parliamentary democracy, thinking that politicians were not professional enough to manage the nation effectively—thinking also that politicians were less concerned with the public interest than with getting elected to office. Weber, as we have seen, was critical of those who indulged in romantic fantasies about an organic society; and he was also very critical of those who advocated socialism. The abolition of private capitalism, he said, would mean that "the state bureaucracy would rule alone." After Weber died, as we know, the center did not hold. Things eventually fell apart, and the Germans got an obscene amalgam of the Left's socialism and the Right's *Gemeinschaft*.

Weber was right to worry about the future of representative government in Germany, which has a history of ineffectual parliaments. But what bearing do his strictures have upon the United States, about which Raymond Aron has recently said: "Nowhere else is the legitimacy of political and economic institutions so deeply rooted"? One should not force an analogy between the political malaise that infected Weber's Germany and our present political discontents, but one thing is clear: in the United States today, as in Weber's Germany, the politician is not respected. A recent *U.S. News and World Report* survey found that Americans ranked the politician last on a list of twenty-six representative professions—last, that is, on a combined scale of decency and efficacy. And, as in Weber's Germany, there are many people in the United States who distrust the very idea of political struggle and believe that politics means giving experts the chance to find the best way "to manage our nation" (the phrase is Elizabeth Drew's).

True, despite the continual fears of intellectuals that a new McCarthyism is waiting in the wings, there exists in the United States no powerful force on the far Right that—like the Ku Klux Klan—yearns for an American *Gemeinschaft* that would exclude blacks, Jews, and Catholics. Nevertheless, the peculiarly confusing political climate in the United States, one in which the citizenry clamors for more and more from government while at the same time it distrusts both politicians and the federal bureaucracy (ranked next to last in *U.S. News and World Report*'s survey), can lead to the erosion of the political center.

For one thing, the climate makes politicians act in ways that ultimately will further undermine the public's confidence in them. Dis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trusted by the electorate and under scrutiny from the press, many politicians feel compelled to push for a slew of legislation in order to convince the citizenry that they are both working hard for their high salaries and acting in the public interest. Last year, for example, twenty thousand bills were introduced in Congress. Yet far from restoring faith in representative government, this legislative activity, which David Broder has called "a saga of wretched excess," only increases the distrust Americans have for politicians. For new laws that mandate new services or new subsidies rarely seem fair to all those affected by them. New laws usually create new areas of resentment; they give people more reasons to heap abuse upon politicians for supposedly obeying the dictates of lobbyists when working out the details of a particular legislative package.

New laws also add to the burdens of bureaucrats, who already have a difficult time administering a welter of confusing or vague laws. The problem of administering laws is, in fact, a very old one. The complaint of an anonymous Roman bureaucrat of the fourth century, whom Ramsay MacMullen quotes in *Roman Government's Response to Crisis: A.D. 235-337*, is not very different, I suspect, from the complaints of some bureaucrats who work in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Beseeching the emperor to clarify the sheer number of laws, he says: "From Your Serenity there remains one remedy for the alleviation of your subjects' concerns, that you should shed light on the jumbled and contradictory decisions in the statutes."

Bureaucrats, it should be clear, do not create bureaucracies, and should not be blamed for the muddle in which they labor. Yet bureaucrats, as Weber knew, are very adept at protecting their own interests—at shielding their programs from legislative review and justifying their continued existence, indeed continuous expansion. Not only can bureaucrats carefully manage the information that flows from their offices to Congress, but they can also make sure that those who benefit from their activities make their voices heard at the appropriate time—that is, when their budgetary requests are before the Congress.

But bureaucrats and bureaucracies, as Weber also knew, are part of a larger problem: the political structure of a society and the nature of its public—that is to say, political—opinion. The United States is far from being subject to the same strains that eventually led to the demise of representative government in Germany. Things will not fall apart here, but they may fester and rot. And representative government, regarded by many as corrupt, inefficient, and irrelevant, may suffer a sea change, becoming a shadow of its former self, with policies arrived at, not by means of informed congressional debate, but by means of simplistic public referenda, narrow judicial decisions, or arbitrary executive orders.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

III

Any discussion of state bureaucracies, then, should be grounded in a particular historical context. It must be seen, Ezra Suleiman remarks in *Politics, Power, and Bureaucracy in France*, "in the context of the larger social and political structure of which it is a part." It would be wrong, though, to imply that all those who castigate bureaucrats and bureaucracies are concerned only with the evils of the modern state. Both the intellectual and the proverbial man in the street (the latter to a lesser degree) dislike modernization because it has meant that large-scale organizations have eradicated small-scale ones, the common assumption being that the larger the organization, the more the likelihood of its metamorphosing into a bureaucracy. Such entities are regarded in peculiarly schizoid ways, as futuristic robots that are ruthlessly impersonal in their preoccupation with efficiency and, at the same time, as antediluvian monsters whose very size makes for inefficiency. The mythology varies somewhat, depending upon whether the critic is attacking global corporations or big government, but many people nowadays join in the chorus of "small is beautiful."

Large organizations obviously are more impersonal than small ones, but it is not exactly clear what most writers mean by impersonal or why impersonality is considered such a bad thing. And it is by no means clear, moreover, that large organizations are less efficient than small ones. Those who utter clichés against bigness often forget that some kinds of bigness give them the opportunity to pursue smallness. They forget that a Boeing jet took them to their favorite "primitive" resort and that a supermarket or a Sears catalog enabled them to make more efficient use of their time.

A better case can be made for the inefficiency of large public organizations, but here, too, distinctions are in order. In his *Affairs of State: Public Life in Late Nineteenth Century America*, Morton Keller gives high marks to the Department of the Interior, which founded Howard University and also established the United States Geological Survey, which was, according to Keller, "the greatest American scientific enterprise of the nineteenth century." When we criticize large public organizations, we have to consider what functions they perform as well as how well they perform them. Many people question the usefulness of the National Institute of Education, yet few would want to abolish the National Institutes of Health or the Tennessee Valley Authority. And few, I imagine, would like to see the FBI abolished, although many would like to see it do more effectively what it is supposed to be doing.

Large, then, should be a neutral adjective; yet the suspicion remains that large organizations are bad because they breed bureaucrats—that is,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

administrators who are mindless rule mongers or heartless efficiency experts. The bureaucrat, I take it, is a bad administrator, someone so obsessed with rules that he loses sight of the broader purposes for which the rules are intended. Why people assume that such types flourish only in large organizations is unclear. More insidious, however, is the assumption that administering is a contemptible profession and that all administrators are by their very nature bureaucrats. In his *Sociology As an Art Form*, Robert Nisbet calls all public officials bureaucrats and then goes on to say that the bureaucrat is "calculating . . . rule-forming, and system-dwelling"; he is also, according to Nisbet, "cold, impersonal, aloof, rule-bound, and tyrannical, utterly wanting in the habits of the heart." Like Jacoby, Nisbet quotes from Weber's speech about the rise of bureaucratic man. Some administrators resemble this portrait, just as some professors resemble the absent-minded, pedantic fool who is the general public's notion of a professor.

Although a book entitled *The Great Administrators* will probably never be written, surely administering must be considered at least a necessary evil, something that has to be done and therefore should be done well. In defending the neglected art of administering against those who think it "trivial and below one's dignity to bother with details," Jacques Barzun has pointed out that "all the great reforms of law and government have begun historically with procedures, with the rules for giving effect to moral and social judgments." Should we not ask of administrators what we ask of other professionals: that they have the requisite skills to perform the job well and that they exercise these skills in a disinterested manner?

If impersonal administrators are an easy target, so, too, are rule-bound ones. Such people, it is assumed, should not be condoned. A recent issue of *Survey* provides a gloss on such complacent notions in the form of a clandestine interview with a prisoner interned in a Soviet labor camp. Asked what he thought of the camp administrators, the prisoner tried to distinguish carefully among them; he spoke of sadists, cynics, and fools, referring finally to a "last group [that] is made up of those who are totally indifferent, and who do nothing (either good or bad) on their own initiative." After characterizing them as "typical Soviet bureaucrats," the prisoner said that "*they treat us more decently than any of the other groups, though of course they carry out all their orders*" (emphasis mine). Soviet bureaucrats, then, are relatively decent insofar as they obey the rules, but it is the rules, of course, with which we should be concerned—the absence of "Law" in the Soviet Union and the continuing existence of what Richard Pipes has called the patrimonial state, in which "there exist no formal limitations on political authority, nor rule of law, nor individual liberties."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In *Russia Under the Old Regime*, Pipes makes use of the Russian past to illuminate the Soviet present. His historical perspective provides a good counter to those writers who place so much negative emphasis on modernization, who see a radical break between premodern and modern societies. The bureaucracy, Pipes recognizes, has always been a powerful force in Russian life because Russia has always been a patrimonial state in which the individual is regarded as a member of a family, not as a citizen. Pipes's explanation, though a necessary corrective to those who hold excessively schematic views of historical change, is not by itself adequate; the Russia of, say, Gogol's *Dead Souls* and Herzen's *My Past and Thoughts* is a far cry from the Russia of Solzhenitsyn's *The First Circle* and *The Gulag Archipelago*. Other countries with patrimonial traditions of governing are not nearly so repressive as the Soviet Union. Any explanation of the nature of the Soviet political structure must take into account the country's ruling ideology of Marxism-Leninism—an ideology that disavows politics for the administration of things—as well as its patrimonial tradition.

The administration of things: that notion has always appealed to many academic intellectuals in the United States, even though few would call themselves Marxists. It is appealing because it implies that the problems of government are best addressed "above" the party level by an impartial body of experts that first formulates policy and then implements it. According to conventional academic-intellectual wisdom, the experts' solutions tend to get lost in the confusions, compromises, and delays of the legislative process. Like bad editors, politicians muck up the work of the administrator-expert, so that a particular policy loses its coherence and integrity. But liberal democratic politics, as Max Weber said, has little to do with finding solutions; it consists, rather, of a perpetual struggle to accommodate a variety of competing and shifting interests; it is a game that has no conclusion.

Weber suggested that what he called the literati's impatience with politicians stems from their resentment of anyone "who seeks and gains power without legitimizing himself through a diploma." It also stems, I suspect, from their suspicion that the politician is less interested in solving a particular problem than in paying back his political debts, so that he can be reelected. The politician, it is said, is not disinterested; he wants to shape a "fair" solution to a problem in such a way that his own special interests are served. But there is no such thing as a fair solution; there are only endless accommodations. The question is not whether we should trust the experts and intellectuals. Of course they should be listened to, for experts and intellectuals do have an indispensable advisory role in the clarification of policy questions, but they should not be thought of as policymakers. The more the citizenry becomes impatient

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with the slow and necessarily confusing game of politics, the more we will be beholden to a new class of administrator-experts who will dictate to the country the policies they think are in the nation's best interests. "Utopia," as Michael Oakeshott has said, "has no lawyers but it bristles with inspectors and overseers." And abounds, we might add, in panels of experts concerned with finding the best way to manage the nation.

In the past ten years, academic intellectuals have become less confident about their ability to articulate the questions involved in policy making. There is a sense of the inevitable limits of social policy—of the difficulties inherent in governmental attempts to implement policies that are designed for the benefit of certain constituencies. Many of these programs not only have failed to attain their goals, but they have also had unintended and harmful effects. Many people, nevertheless, believe that such policy failures support the opposite conclusion: government intervention was not successful because it was not massive enough. Whether new programs or massive increases in the budgets for current programs would be effective is difficult to say. One thing, however, we do know: such programs would result in the expansion of the federal bureaucracy. And yet the same people who argue for such programs complain about bureaucratization and are especially suspicious of the work done by several well-entrenched bureaucracies: the CIA, the FBI, and the Department of Defense. They suggest, though, that both participatory democracy and better legislative oversight will keep new bureaucracies on the right track, so that they will fulfill their legislative mandate and remain responsive to public opinion.

But we have seen how difficult it is for a beleaguered, demoralized, and overworked Congress to oversee current federal programs. Why should things be different in the future, especially if the number of programs that must be reviewed has increased? And how could some form of participatory democracy—whatever the phrase means—work effectively to review such programs? If the administrator-expert can usually manipulate Congress, surely he can devise ways of getting around the recommendations of any citizens' committee. Such committees, moreover, would make the work of federal bureaucracies even more inefficient, time consuming, and expensive than it is at present.

Subject to generally ineffectual legislative review, federal bureaucracies will continue to wield a good deal of authority, for they have been given broad powers to work out the details of any legislative act. Only a strong political center can resist bureaucratic expansion, but the prospects for a strong center are not good. The center cannot hold by itself, since it depends on public opinion; and the public, though it condemns bureaucrats and bureaucracies, increasingly seems to admire those who espouse the public interest while regarding with suspicion those who are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

interested in profit making. Most distressing is the public's lack of regard for the politician and its distrust of the accommodations that are inevitable in the making of policy. The center cannot hold if it is both scorned and asked to do too much—asked to solve problems in ways that are fair to all those affected by them.

My argument, then, is less against bureaucracies and bureaucrats than for a strong political center. Only such a center can intelligently consider what John Stuart Mill called "one of the most difficult and complicated questions in the art of government"—the question of the right mix of public planning and private initiative. This question, as Mill knew, is one of detail, one "in which many and various considerations must be kept in view, and no absolute rule . . . be laid down." As such, it is best considered in legislative debate by those who represent and also lead public opinion. Those who speak glibly about the bureaucratization of the world and the similarity of all advanced industrial societies forget that in totalitarian polities this debate cannot take place, for no parliamentary center exists there, and no public, political forum that enables public opinion to form. And those who indulge in indiscriminate bureaucracy baiting do not realize, strangely enough, that the party running a totalitarian polity can be more effective in containing the state bureaucracy than the politicians governing a liberal democratic polity, since they do not have to answer to anyone if they decide to make drastic changes in the bureaucracy. In such polities, bureaucracies can be kept under control—but by the party, not by the people, though "the will of the people" may be invoked in order to do so. Only representative government can contain bureaucratic expansion while at the same time preserving liberty, but if it is to do so those at the political center must have the support of the public at large. In the United States both academic intellectuals and the general public need to take a hard look not only at the federal bureaucracy but at their own inconsistent political views.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Formulas, Numbers, Words: Statistics in Prose

WILLIAM KRUSKAL

Statisticians deal professionally with symbols. Ultimately our symbols stand for, or relate to, sacks of potatoes, political opinions, illnesses of people—that is, to relatively material, palpable objects, to actual things that should always be kept in mind. Yet in abstraction and abstruseness, statistical discussions, like those of any scientific practice, may be far away from potatoes, presidential nominees, and peritonitis morbidity.

The symbols we use are, in the first place, numbers, but numbers alone are insufficient. For sensible statistical treatment they require some kind of theoretical, mathematical coherence, however simple and however tacit it may be. Thus even to add two different numbers of gallons of oil presumes disjointness of objects, the same unit of measurement, and an additive scale. In even slightly more complex circumstances, sensible treatment of the numbers may rest on a complex set of assumptions about statistical independence, approximate normality of distribution, and other properties of considerable abstractness.

So, starting with numbers, we are inexorably led to the abstract, mathematical side of statistics—call it, for brevity and at the risk of distortion, the side of *formulas*. It includes formulas, taken literally, together with much mathematics from the simple to the deep, and a range of philosophical thought as well.

There is a third side of statistics that corresponds to a third kind of symbol: the side of *words*. Numbers, formulas, and words make up a useful trichotomy, and here I shall primarily discuss words in statistical theory and practice. Important as they are, words get short shrift in most statistical teaching and exposition, even though these are done, to a large extent, in terms of words. Perhaps we statisticians feel generally that the study of words belongs to the psychologist, the linguist, the scholar of language, but not to the statistician as such (unless, of course, the statistician is helping the psychologist or linguist with his empirical studies).

Yet words play a fundamental role in all statistical activity. The most abstruse mathematical statistics requires words for motivation, explanation, and perhaps even creation. Expositions of numerical statistical analyses require words, and different words for different audiences; I might, looking ahead, even write "significantly different words." Documentation of numerical data and documentation of statistical computation procedures require words, and the producers and consumers of such documentation recognize that to provide clear wording is a far from trivial task.

Perhaps one reason for statisticians' widespread indifference to words is that we are determined, along with Humpty-Dumpty, to be masters of the symbols we use. As Humpty said, "When *I* use a word . . . it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less." Yet Lewis Carroll himself was probably sensitive to the impossibility of such a solipsistic program. First, there would arise the infinite-regress problem of defining words or symbols more generally in terms of still other symbols. Second, to use words in wholly individualistic ways is to invite inattention, needless controversy, and regressive confusion. Even for purely mathematical symbols, indi-

WILLIAM KRUSKAL is Ernest DeWitt Burton Distinguished Service Professor of Statistics at the University of Chicago, where he is also currently serving as dean of the Division of the Social Sciences.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vidualism to an extreme would be troublesome: suppose someone began to use multiplication signs to denote addition. A still simpler case is the mild confusion that sometimes results from the different conventions used in America and Europe for the decimal point and the comma.

(Not everyone would agree with my suggestion that Lewis Carroll intended as ironic his often cited Humpty-Dumpty statement. For example, Martin Gardner, in *The Annotated Alice*, interprets Carroll literally. Yet Gardner himself is well aware of the dangers in symbolic eccentricity. His theological novel, *The Flight of Peter Fromm*, contains the following apt passage: "Shall I prove to you that all visible objects are green? It is easy. I define 'green' as the property of reflecting light. All visible objects reflect light, therefore all visible objects are green. For the impregnability of such assertions, however, I must pay a heavy price. Not only have my statements become vacuous, but because my language departs so widely from common speech my assertions are sure to cause more confusion than enlightenment. Of course I then can have the pleasure of explaining to my critics how they misinterpret me.")

Thomas Hobbes had a theme somewhat like Humpty-Dumpty's when he wrote in *Leviathan* that "words are wise men's counters, they do but reckon by them; but they are the money of fools." Yet no matter how much words are but counters, to be arbitrarily assigned, those assignments require considerable consistency and sharpness.

A common misuse of statistical words lies in the transplantation of reasonably precise technical terms into inappropriate contexts. The term "statistically significant" is a frequent victim. In a recent letter to the *New York Times*, for example, a letter about our postal system, the writer says:

> The vastness of this country, the high mobility rate of many of its inhabitants and its statistically significant immigrant population all contribute to the need for an efficient postal service.

That "statistically significant" gives the sentence a lot of rhetorical weight, although all it appears to mean is "large." A similar case appears in a *New York Times* article by Harold M. Schmeck: " . . . the numbers involved in this comparison were considered too small to be statistically significant."

This difficulty is not limited to the ephemeral columns of newspapers; one may find it in highly regarded scientific journals. For example, in a 1975 issue of *Science*, the official journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, an article on temperature trends says that

> It is difficult to test our results . . . against observations because no statistically significant *global* record of temperature back to 1600 has been constructed.

Here the significant phrase apparently means "accurate," but I am not certain.

A 1973 example from the same journal says that

> . . . if we take n pictures of N_0 particles, . . . [we have] $6nN_0$ coordinates, a number which can easily be made sufficiently large to have statistical significance.

Here again the term is used in a vague, almost boastful sense.

In fact the phrase "statistical significance" has a widely understood, rather precise meaning that is taught in introductory statistics textbooks and courses. It refers to a so-called tail probability that is surprisingly small under a relevant, if sometimes tacit, hypothesis. For example, the hypothesis may be that a new soporific is no better than a related standard one. The experiment may use as subjects ten pairs of people, perhaps matched for age, sex, state of health, and the like. One randomly chosen member of each pair uses the new soporific; the other member uses the old. If in all ten pairs the new soporific does better, we might well say that the new is better than the old with statistical significance—in fact, at a so-called significance level of $1/2^{10} = 1/1{,}024$, or a bit less than 0.001. That small number represents the probability that the superiority of the new soporific would be observed in all ten pairs *if* the hypothesis of indifference really were true. Suppose, next, that the new soporific were seen to be superior in just *nine* of the ten cases. One would still be likely to write of statistical significance, this time at the significance level $(10 + 1)/1{,}024$, or about 0.01. That number is the probability, under the indifference hypothe-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sis, of finding what in fact we did find (nine out of ten) or something more extreme (ten out of ten). But enough; this is an essay about statistics, not a lesson in statistics.

Another often misused statistical expression with a precise technical meaning is "random sample." I shall not present a one-paragraph introductory description here (although that would not be difficult), but shall content myself with illustrating the range of misuse.

One misuse is pejorative; for it, a random sample is an erratic grab bag. An example of that misuse occurs in a book review by Allan K. Wildman in the *Journal of Modern History:* "What we are given is a careless and incomplete random sampling to illustrate a passing point." At the other extreme, the term "random sample" may be used to provide a spuriously positive scientific effect, like the white jacket worn by an actor in a television toothpaste commercial. For example, in a 1973 *New York Times* article, Lawrence K. Altman reports a Swedish study on views of death. He paraphrases a Swedish cardiologist: "Dr. Biörk . . . emphasized that his analysis was . . . not a scientific study based on a random sample." In terms of the statistical meaning of "random sampling," it is neither necessary nor sufficient for ensuring that a study be scientific.

There are also expressions that do *not* have precise, commonly accepted statistical meanings, but are widely (and wildly) misused in a profusion of senses in both the lay and the scientific literature. My own favorite is the term "representative sample." That term, with its built-in begging of the question, has an authoritative ring that forms an orotund trap of fake eloquence and fake precision.

Sometimes the term "representative sample" is used solely as decoration. A nice example is provided in a 1975 *New York Times* column by Raymond J. Cormier that appeared twice, first in French and then in English. Cormier wrote first that ". . . dans un échantillon de 400 universités représentatives, les inscriptions aux cours du français ont baissé de 30 pour cent." Next day the English version appeared: ". . . in a nationally reliable sample of 400 colleges, French enrollment went down nearly 30 percent." Neither the idea of a representative university nor of a nationally reliable sample has an accepted, sharp meaning in statistics.

Sometimes the representative idea is wholly confused in what appears at first to be a technical statement. For example, an article on political polls by Ken Bode in the January 17, 1976, *New Republic* quotes an unnamed pollster: "Every time you draw a sample you have a 95 percent chance that it accurately represents the total population and a five percent chance that it does not."

Another sense is that of diversity. The 1975 Annual Report of the Western Publishing Company says that the "representative sampling of products shown on the following pages graphically illustrates the diversification and appeal of our lines." And sometimes "representative" means typical; it is used that way by Virginia Woolf in *Three Guineas*, where she says, after quotations from the Marquess of Londonderry, Winston Churchill, and a Mr. Cyril Chaventry of North Wembley: "That opinion, too, is a representative opinion, one from a great number to the same effect."

On the other hand, Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his *Representative Men*, meant by "representative" the ideal quintessence of a type. Plato is the representative philosopher, Goethe the representative writer, and so on.

The blur between typical and extraordinary is at first puzzling, but C. S. Lewis gives an explanation in his *Studies in Words:*

> . . . this demand for the typical easily merges into a demand for the perfect. The quest for the wholly normal cabbage . . . would involve the rejection of every cabbage which had suffered from such historical accidents as bad soil, unequal sun . . . , too much or too little rain, and so on. In the end you would be looking for the ideal cabbage.

It is a temptation to continue with these problems of representativeness, but I move on to a related example, the use of the word "explain" in expositions of the concept of correlation, or in correlational analyses of data. We see statements like "Hours of study explain 62 percent of the variance in test scores." The danger here is that "explain" comes perilously and ambiguously close to "cause." As Edward Tufte says, in his *Data Analysis for Politics and Policy:*

> . . . some researchers . . . play on the ambiguity of the word "explain" . . . to avoid the risk of making

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an out-and-out assertion of causality while creating the appearance that something really was explained substantively as well as statistically.

Another generic way in which choice of wording affects atmosphere arises in trials of a new medical treatment. An enthusiastic reporter may write that the "new treatment is better than the conventional treatment with statistical significance at the *0.05* level." A more neutral writer might say that "the 95 percent confidence interval for the new treatment's cure rate, minus that of the old, is from 1 percent to 11 percent." The second statement formally implies the first, yet what a difference there is in the impression left in the reader's mind!

As we see, the statistical field of hypothesis testing is a rich source of verbal misuse. Some years ago, I had many conversations with the late L. J. Savage about his criticisms of hypothesis testing as ordinarily exposited and practiced. I agreed with many of those criticisms, although they did not all apply to the core ideas sensibly interpreted, but rather to the way those ideas had become inflexible, conventional, and vulgarized over time. Savage was not pleased when I predicted that his own subtle, creative, and ingenious ideas about subjective probability would, if they caught on, inevitably become rigidified and vulgarized; yet that is what has happened. Such a process seems to be inevitable: success breeds vulgarization. Lionel Trilling in his book *The Liberal Imagination* puts it thus:

> . . . organization means delegation, and agencies, and bureaus, and technicians . . . the ideas that can survive delegation, that can be passed on to agencies and bureaus and technicians, incline to be ideas of . . . a certain simplicity; they give up . . . largeness and modulation and complexity in order to survive.

We have already touched on the misuse of the idea of statistical significance. Two other paired terms are the mysterious ones of "acceptance" or "rejection" of a hypothesis. Endless argument has been based on overly literal use of those words, which truly are Hobbesian counters but are misunderstood because they are redolent of everyday psychological and commercial interpretations. In technical statistics, "acceptance" and "rejection" of a hypothesis are simply canonical words for two actions or decisions, one of which would be preferred were the hypothesis in fact true, and the other if it were in fact false. We may look down our noses at the oversimplification represented by the dichotomies; but, given those dichotomies, it is good to have words for the moieties. It is misleading, however, to have words with such emotional connotations.

I am not tilting at windmills here. One of the most popular introductory texts for statistics falls squarely into the connotational trap; it argues that we never *really* accept the null hypothesis, we just fail to reject it. Hence we need not worry about error of the second kind, or power. The author of the text even continued that fraudulent message from his first edition through later ones, thus marking another triumph of stubbornness.

Yet to use denatured, flavorless words would deprive us of liveliness and retard the study and spread of new ideas. Suppose, for example, that catastrophe theory (a recent mathematical development) were called the "theory of discontinuities from folded surfaces." Or, to turn to a central area of statistical theory, suppose that Sir R. A. Fisher—a master at public relations—had not taken over from ordinary English such evocative words as "sufficient," "efficient," and "consistent" and made them into precisely defined terms of statistical theory. He might, after all, have used utterly dull terms for those properties of estimators, calling them characteristics *A*, *B*, and *C*—or, more egocentrically, *R*, *A*, and *F*. Would his work have had the same smashing influence that it did? I think not, or at least not as rapidly. Still, the scope of the concepts can certainly be questioned. Sufficiency may be altogether spoiled, for example, by tiny changes in the distributions specified by the underlying model; so may efficiency and consistency.

Or turn to Fisher's wonderful phrase "analysis of variance," and the accompanying conventional tables in which columns add up so neatly. Is it too cynical to think that the lovely term—half-mystery, half-promise—and the orderly tables helped to win acceptance, quite aside from the underlying theory?

There is the dilemma. We want to be objective and we value the trappings of objectivity—for example, somber tables of numbers and terrifying pages of formulas. Yet

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

when we write in words about numbers and formulas we seek acceptance and readership, so we are moved to make up exciting terms, and exciting terms may mislead. In 1938, Thomas Mann wrote in *The Coming Victory of Democracy* that "humanity, in small things as in great, strives for variety, changes, for the new, because it promises him an amelioration and an alleviation of his eternally semi-painful condition." If R. A. Fisher chooses to clothe his great ideas in exciting words, one cannot fiercely object. The nub of the difficulty is presented by the false Fishers, whose exciting presentations cover triteness or even nonsense.

Such issues must be faced by all of us in teaching, talking, and writing. As I prepare this essay, I ask myself the unanswerable question whether the anecdotes and quotations I use to try to keep your attention may not be shameful and meretricious. The only basic response, of course, is discussion and more discussion. So I hope that my remarks—shameful and meretricious though they may be—will stimulate some of you to discuss these difficulties with the use of words at a depth you do not ordinarily plumb.

In *The Small House at Allington*, Anthony Trollope, writing about his Plantagenet Palliser—later to become prime minister—as a young man, notes: "Statistics were becoming dry to him, and love was very sweet. Statistics, he thought, might be made as enchanting as ever, if only they could be mingled with love."

I digress for the sake of love to a brief discussion of one of the more fascinating words in statistics, the word "normal." We have in statistics the normal distribution and the normal equations. In other parts of life there are normal schools, normal hydrocarbons, normal ranges in medicine, and (some time ago) "back to normalcy" as a political slogan. The C. S. Lewis passage quoted earlier mentioned the normal cabbage.

To call the normal distribution normal is more than an arbitrary naming; a normative aspect is one that persists. Some statistics textbooks published even in this decade misleadingly say that the normal distribution is so called because "it is the distribution normally encountered."

The origin of the phrase "normal distribution" is unclear. Stephen Stigler, professor of statistics at the University of Wisconsin, and I have been trying to track it down, with partial success, by starting with the writings of Sir Francis Galton. He wrote *about* the normal distribution at great length, and with an amazing range of elegant variation. Among the terms he used were "the exponential distribution," "the law of error," "the law of deviation," "the Gaussian Law," "the law of statistical constancy," and, of course, "the normal law," the last first used by Galton in 1877 as far as we can find. Karl Pearson claimed at a later time that he himself had coined the term "normal" as a neutral word to avoid the chauvinistic, competing, nationalistic "Gaussian" and "Laplacian," but it seems to us that his memory was wrong.

Our current hunch is based on the observation that Galton and his contemporaries, when writing of the normal distribution, not only used terms like "the exponential distribution" but, to avoid monotony, brought in vaguer expressions: "the usual distribution," "the commonly encountered distribution," and, of course, "the normal distribution." (Indeed, "normal" in that sense was used still earlier, in 1873, by Charles Sanders Peirce, the great American philosopher and statistician.) We think that somehow "normal" won out among the synonyms. Why should it have won? I speculate that "normal" is a word with powerful, positive connotations because of the ambiguity between its two meanings: (1) something desirable and (2) something commonly found. A major theme in our culture, after all, is the desirability of what is commonly found, so the two senses reinforce each other.

The history of the term "normal school" is related to that speculation. Why should a teacher training institute be called normal? Presumably because it is a model, but a model for what? For other teacher training institutes? When Stigler and I began to look into this question, we were told that the term went back to the founding of the École Normale by Lakanal in 1794 during the French Revolution. Yet we quickly found that the term went back at least to usage in Vienna in 1770 by an ambitious pedagogue named Joseph Messmer. As part of Maria Theresa's educational reforms, Messmer soon became head of the first *Normalschule*, a school for youngsters to serve as a model or norm. To it

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was attached a teacher training establishment that used the school for practice and observation by student teachers. As time went on, the word "normal" apparently shifted from the model school for kids to the school for teachers. After all, teachers are older, bigger, and tougher; is it surprising that they should appropriate the best adjective? Soon the term came to be applied to teachers' schools even without children.

I turn next to difficulties of wording in the public documents of government statistical agencies. Those agencies have special problems with maintaining objectivity, in part because of pressures—at any rate, feared pressures, or alleged pressures—stemming from partisan politics. In addition, government documents issue as a rule from agencies, not individuals, and their official status requires at least a strong attempt at impersonality.

One need not be a naïve Marxist or a cynical marketing expert to agree that cultural predispositions affect government statistics at fundamental levels. Even such concepts as the household, head of household, address, marital status, race, and so on are reflections of our ambient culture, and they lead to difficulties as that culture creaks, groans, and changes. Individuals without fixed addresses or attachment to specific households, for example, may cause irritating definitional problems. Matters get much worse for such studies as crime victimization surveys, in which respondents are asked about crimes against themselves or their families. What one person may regard as a forceful attack may not be so regarded by another, and if that difference is confounded with other characteristics (of income, education, and so on), fresh problems of interpretation arise.

Transition from a table of numbers, perhaps the results of a survey, to a statement in words is rarely simple. The monthly employment tabulations of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the monthly consumer price index figures, the periodic tabulations of crime frequencies, imports and exports, school registrations, and so forth are typically accompanied by statements in words of what they mean. How is this to be done? What are the important numbers, the major shifts from last month or last year?

Here enters a standard ambiguity. Should importance of changes be measured statistically—say by statistical significance via multiples of standard errors of differences—or substantively according to their economic, criminological, or other import? Perhaps by both. A basic trouble with substantive import is that it is relatively more subjective, and I suspect that in many cases statistical significance is the primary requirement for mention of a change as part of a routine transition from numbers into words. Of course this can get one into classic troubles. For example, it might happen that both white and nonwhite unemployment shift *less* than 1.6 times their standard errors (or whatever the conventional multiple is), yet total unemployment shifts *more* than 1.6 times its standard error.

In the early seventies, the Bureau of Labor Statistics used the term "significant," or at least "non-significant," in its releases, without making it clear whether statistical or substantive significance was intended. Recently the bureau seems to have dropped the word "significance," usually contenting itself with flat statements, sometimes qualified by modifiers like "slightly" or "relatively small." That hardly settles the issue, for there have to be policies about when a level or a shift should be mentioned, and in what terms.

The problem for the agency is difficult. On the one hand, it can hardly be guided by a fixed algorithm in going from numbers to words; on the other hand, any ad-lib human intervention creates subjectivity that may be marvelous in itself but may also distort and disturb. One can imagine the discussions at the Bureau of Labor Statistics about these matters; I surmise that they are protracted and heated, yet they give rise to extraordinarily sober, almost inhuman, prose. Presumably such prose is used to help maintain objectivity and professional integrity, but one may wonder whether objectivity in such matters is ever possible. The very choice of things to mention, the order in which they are mentioned, the choice even of sober adjectives and adverbs, and so on, all have inevitable subjective elements. I suggest that a public document explaining how the Bureau of Labor Statistics (or any agency) goes about making the transition from numbers to words would be a valuable step toward that desirable, if never attainable, objectivity.

If summaries in words of tabulated statis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tics could somehow be done by an algorithm, then we might examine the algorithm and make judgments about it. Alas, or perhaps hooray, no such algorithm seems likely. Variations in the background of the data and in the goals of the analysis stand in the way. Besides, how can an agency recruit and keep good analysts without giving them personal responsibility and opportunities for creative work?

In one approach by the National Center for Health Statistics, the text of a report is broken into separate statistical statements that are classified into five types. The first type is a simple characterization, for example: "The average length of illness for males was eight days"; the second type is a single comparison, for example: "Males were ill on average for two days longer than females." Then rules are applied related to underlying sampling or measurement error. In a simple characterization, for example, the coefficient of variation must be no more than 25 percent. For a single comparison, there must be statistical significance at the 5 percent level.

One reservation about such a procedure is that it atomizes a report into little single statements without much attention to pattern or interrelationships. One may also wonder about the effect of any set of rigid rules. Specification of a particular significance level, for example, seems constraining, even though editors of some scientific journals do it, and even though significance level is specified in one set of HEW equal economic opportunity regulations! A different kind of concern is about statements that *might* have been made but were not.

Statisticians know that words are important to statistics, yet surely their importance is not fully recognized. Self-conscious empirical studies of the meanings conveyed by variant ways of discussing statistics ought to be encouraged. It seems ludicrous for us to be concerned about exact significance levels, accuracy of standard errors, robustness of Bayesian procedures against fluctuation in prior beliefs, and so on, and yet to throw away all that exactness through our lack of concern about what gets communicated in the words we use—to each other and to our wider publics. Why do statisticians so seldom make studies of conveyed meanings? I do not know, but I take as a possible rallying cry a final quotation from Ralph Waldo Emerson, who says in his essay "The Poet": "Words and deeds are quite indifferent modes of the divine energy. Words are also actions, and actions are a kind of words."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Escape Artist

M. L. Hester

Here we have an escape artist
without arms or legs. He's put in
a straitjacket, wrapped in chains, bolted
in a footlocker, and thrown off a bridge
into polluted Lake Michigan.

Within a few seconds he's bobbing at the surface.

Truly this is an amazing feat.

He learned how to escape early, vanishing
before his father's disappointed eyes
could lock him tight. Whenever the family
went to a drive-in, he was riveted
in the car's trunk, but escaped through
the manifold and watched the movies
lying between the front wheels.

When company came he escaped the hall closet.

Finally he was dumped into a Goodwill box
at the shopping center. He escaped
and came to us. We immediately saw his potential.
There wasn't a jail in America that could hold him.

Chicago is a fool for this sort of act.
It's really a shame he can't swim; when
the applause is over, we have to
lower a winch and haul him out.

M. L. HESTER's poetry has appeared in academic journals and little magazines.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

divorcée

GERALD LOCKLIN

all the poets complain of her.
they say her child is always crying
in the bedroom while they're
trying to get comfortable on

the couch. i have not found
this true. her child would like attention,
but he'll go where he is told.
her living room is neat and tasteful.

if she's a trifle too solicitous
to make you feel at home,
such thoughtfulness is easily forgiven.
her life is not an easy one.

although she has her guilt, fears, loneliness,
she is scrupulous their mention to avoid.
she has whatever type of music suits your taste;
you know she really can't afford so many records.

her liquor cabinet does not run dry,
but she appreciates it if you bring your own.
she reads more quickly than you do
and can converse on many topics.

in bed she is experienced and giving.
she would like you to stay,
but knows you won't.
she does not expect love.

i like the way she's made ends meet
and someday someone she deserves will stay.
the poets have been so busy looking for poems
that as usual they've missed the point.

GERALD LOCKLIN teaches English at California State University–Long Beach. His most recent books are *The Criminal Mentality* (poems), *The Chase: A Novel*, and *The Four-Day Work Week, and Other Stories*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

J. G. Frazer Revisited

ROBERT ACKERMAN

There is a real sense in which one may speak of Sir J. G. Frazer as a modern mythmaker despite himself—one who, along with Darwin, Marx, Freud, and Einstein, has supplied the underlying scientific metaphors that pervade and shape modern consciousness and permit us to think about ourselves in the world. Certainly in the English-speaking world Frazer was responsible, beyond all others and long before Freud, for the way educated persons came to see their lives as somehow problematically related to a primitive substratum of the self. The reason one finally demurs from regarding him as what the Germans call a "world-historical" figure is his insistent inability or unwillingness to see the import of his work in modern cultural terms.

It is not a question here of Frazer's not being a Frazerian. Rather, it is a question of his own extreme political conservatism and personal shyness, which led to an increasing estrangement from, and antipathy toward, the twentieth century and the modern spirit —however deeply he was investigating and bringing to light the obscure foundations of its social institutions. Although he has suffered far more from the ravages of revisionists than any of the other major figures mentioned above, there is no doubt that in his day Frazer contributed mightily to anthropology, folklore, comparative religion, classics, and even belles lettres. Today his principal professional descendants, the anthropologists, disavow him nearly universally, or else treat him as a dinosaur whose bulk has caused him to founder in the primeval (that is, pre-Malinowskian) ooze. The title of Sir Edmund Leach's 1961 *Daedalus* essay, "Golden Bough or Gilded Twig?" expresses well the current disdain. Thus it is not at all paradoxical that today Frazer is probably more of a real presence in literary criticism, to which he made no explicit contribution, than in any of the other disciplines in which he worked.

Although there have been and continue to be important exceptions, English-speaking anthropology over the last half century has been and continues to be passionately scientistic in its hopes, claims, and methods. One consequence—and it shares this trait with other sciences—is a built-in positivism and an aversion to history, both general and its own. Accordingly, when anthropologists have come to write histories of their discipline, these have tended to be rather crudely whiggish, with the historian carefully and tendentiously creating some one special tradition from the past in order to argue that the kind of anthropology in which he and his scholarly allies are now engaged represents true continuity with this privileged mainstream. Naturally, from such a profoundly ahistorical perspective, and with virtually no scholarly descendants to counterpolemicize on his behalf, Frazer has emerged as little more than an embarrassment, a horrible example of the bankruptcy of the comparative method and philosophical evolutionism. The fact that he was and still is the most widely read anthropologist who ever lived is either ignored or else adduced to illustrate the lamentable taste of the so-called educated reader. The fact that anthropology, like history, has connections with other kinds of imaginative prose, and that the literary qualities of Frazer's vision (as of Malinowski's or Lévi-Strauss's) might have something to do with his public acceptance never enters into

ROBERT ACKERMAN is at work on both an edition of Sir J. G. Frazer's selected letters and the first full-length biography of Frazer.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

consideration, for style and vision are scarcely quantifiable variables.

As is commonly known, the modern ethnographer, at least in the English-speaking world, works by the method of participant-observation: he first experiences the natives' reality as a modern Westerner, and then somehow imaginatively reconstructs its meaning for the natives. After a time in the field, he gains knowledge and confidence in his powers of empathy and insight, and thus increasingly internalizes the natives' consciousness until his sensibility and theirs are approximately simultaneous. Through the necessity to develop a dual consciousness, his fieldwork becomes a first-class course in ironic reflection, both personal and cross-cultural. But because so many anthropologists cherish hopes for their profession as a "hard" science, this inherently subjectivist and ironic phenomenology tends to be ignored in histories and methodological essays and appears only in diaries and informal conversations.

Accordingly, the positivist anthropological historian, who believes that social science is composed of "findings" rather than theories or ideas, scarcely has the inclination to register, much less to comment upon, the fact that leaps to the attention of the literary reader—that Frazer is a particularly ironic writer. Consequently, the nature and cause of that irony never come up.

No matter how long it has been since one last looked into *The Golden Bough*—and here I must for the moment drastically abridge Frazer by making him synonymous with his best-known work—one recalls being impressed by its author's sometimes wavering but ultimately deeply ironic sense of the way in which man, perpetually questing after knowledge, is constantly and unconsciously constrained by the unexamined primitive foundations of his social institutions, from the bonds of which he never entirely escapes. Such ultimate considerations, however, are by no means the only, or even the most frequent, irony in *The Golden Bough*. Indeed, most of the irony is much more straightforward, consisting as it does of oblique or direct potshots that Frazer takes at religious practices, institutions, and finally at religion itself, which is portrayed as fundamentally irrational and thus worthless as a guide to life.

Although psychohistorians, recalling James Mill, Philip Gosse, and Ernest Pontifex, might conclude that such a concerted, lifelong attack on religion as Frazer's *must* be construed as a kind of extended psychological protest against the father, the facts do not support such a reading. In the course of preparing to write a book about Frazer, nothing in what I have turned up about his youth leads me to believe that he was the victim of some blasting childhood trauma that marked him out and created what we might call an ironist from deepest impulse. Rather than look for a nonexistent blacking factory, I believe that his irony was not primarily caused by psychological idiosyncrasy but that it appears precisely, and not at all coincidentally, whenever Frazer adopts primitive religion as his subject.

This turning point can be dated with confidence to 1883/84. It was then that the erstwhile classicist Frazer, who had gained his Trinity College fellowship in 1879 on the strength of a dissertation on platonic epistemology, was drafted into the study of religion by his new friend, William Robertson Smith, the brilliant theologian and biblical scholar. Smith, newly arrived at Cambridge and Trinity College after having been exonerated in the last important heresy trials in Scotland, found Frazer, his fellow Scot, somewhat at a loss for direction. He immediately conscripted Frazer into writing articles on classical subjects for that great monument of late Victorian rationalism, the ninth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, of which Smith was editor. But because the ninth edition was already well advanced in publication (in those days such works came out a volume at a time), the volumes from A through O had already appeared. Therefore all Frazer's contributions were on subjects beginning with P and subsequent letters of the alphabet: Penates, Priapus, Proserpine, and so on. And thus it was this accident of publication that caused Smith, a considerable anthropologist himself, to assign the younger man the fateful articles on Taboo and then on Totemism. This latter essay grew so long that even the most sympathetic editor could print only an abridged version; the full text appeared in 1887 as Frazer's first book, *Totemism*, and immediately established him in the then thinly populated world of anthropology.

Before going further, let me offer a sample

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the famous Frazerian irony. Since, as I have said, it appeared just when he discovered his new subject, the sample I choose comes from his very first piece on primitive religion, characteristically entitled "On Certain Burial Customs as Illustrative of the Primitive Theory of the Soul." This long talk, filled with the erudition that would soon become synonymous with Frazer's name, was given to the assembled luminaries of the Anthropological Institute, including Herbert Spencer, Francis Galton, and E. B. Tylor, at a meeting in 1885. (This was fully five years before the publication of the first edition of *The Golden Bough.*) On such an occasion Frazer, always sensitive to tone and nuance, and with all the resources of a highly developed prose style at his disposal, would have taken pains to strike the right rhetorical note with his audience of gentlemen-scholars, so they would see him as erudite but no pedant, a man of the world among other men of the world. I might add that we know the address was a success, because some of the ensuing discussion has been preserved in the minutes of the meeting.

Frazer is here talking about the treatment of illness among primitives. He argues that since the primitives believe that the soul of a sleeper wanders during sleep, and thus a sick man is in danger because some malign agency can prevent his soul's return, logic dictates that the invalid be prevented from sleeping. "With this intention the Circassians will dance, sing, play and tell stories to a sick man by the hour. Fifteen to twenty young fellows, naturally selected for the strength of their lungs, will seat themselves around his bed, and make night hideous by singing in chorus at the top of their voices, while from time to time one of them will create an agreeable variety by banging with a hammer on a ploughshare which has been thoughtfully placed for the purpose by the sick man's bed."

Just as noteworthy as the artfully placed modifiers—"agreeable variety," "thoughtfully placed"—is Frazer's confidence that he has discerned the true motives underlying these bizarre actions, culled as they are from all quarters of the globe. To underline this, in a footnote on the first page of the printed version of his talk he announces his policy concerning his use of sources, which of course in that pre-fieldwork era were all printed texts. He says: "It is to be observed that the explanations which I give of many of the following customs are not the explanations offered by the people who practise these customs. Sometimes people give no explanation of their customs, sometimes (much oftener than not) a wrong one. The reader is therefore to understand that the authorities referred to are quoted for the fact of the customs, not for their explanations." That is, not only does Frazer use the customs as so many occasions for his ironic commentary, but he stands in adversary relationship to their very existence in the texts he employs. He consults authorities, but denies them their authoritativeness.

If one cannot trust the natives, whom, then, can one trust? A person who knows better, who can see the total spectrum of primitive religious behavior, and who also understands the laws that govern the operation of the mind and the laws that govern its evolution—Frazer himself. A caution here: The question whether an outsider can ever know better than a native the meaning of an item of behavior or an artifact is still hotly debated among ethnographers. Frazer, however, like all his British contemporaries, seems to have settled the matter in his own mind with ease. For him, there is no question that the primitive mind, less highly evolved than ours, *can* be plumbed, and without too much difficulty. Like ours, it works by association, but unlike ours it makes mistaken associations—thus it resembles most closely the minds of the children of today. The present-day failure of ethnographic nerve, generated by our sense of the complexity of culture after fifty years of field experience, is still far in the future for Frazer. By means of his simplistic assumptions, he is able to group vast masses of behavioral data under a relative handful of headings, thus making comprehensible the underpinnings of our social institutions.

These simplistic tendencies, which exaggerated the real and undeniable regularities of human behavior and institutions, enhanced the persuasiveness of Frazer's vision to a post-Darwinian, and especially a post–World War I, secularized readership. Frazer was one of a long, noble line of scholars of grand-scale, encyclopedic inclinations for whom similarities have always been more important than differences. They were the sort

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who adopted some radically simple classificatory device, such as Frazer's own evolutionary lockstep movement from magic to religion to science, by which they oversimplified the confusion that human behavior, in its nearly infinite variety, presents. Certainly this scholarly predisposition is alive in our day, as witness the illustrious examples of Arnold Toynbee and Mircea Eliade.

How, then, is Frazer's tendency to work in what we might call extremely capacious and elastic categories to be connected to his irony? Along with the condescension that comes from colonialism and its attendant spirit, racism, and along with his seemingly innate rationalist temperament, another source of the irony was his epistemology and its assumptions. Here he speaks, in the preface to the second edition of *The Golden Bough* (1900), about the possible future value of his work: "It has been my wish and intention to draw as sharply as possible the line of demarcation between my facts and the hypotheses by which I have attempted to colligate them. Hypotheses are necessary but often temporary bridges built to connect isolated facts. If my light bridges should sooner or later break down or be superseded by more solid structures, I hope that my book may still have its utility and its interest as a repertory of facts."

In other words, the facts stand by and for themselves. Because Frazer seems to have been unaware or unconcerned that the questions one asks largely determine the answers one gets, and because his disparagement of theory was so drastic as to permit him to dissociate theory from facts, he must have been confronted with the vast masses of data that his indefatigable industry turned up, with only a minimal explicit structure to organize them. Because he regarded the facts as representing the state of things "out there," he seems to have felt justified, in what may be the greatest example of the imitative fallacy anywhere, in offering the reader a stunning mass of data grouped in only the broadest, most general fashion and in a style permitting any number of divagations and excursions. In fact, Frazer's industry seems to have outpaced by far his capacity to absorb its results, and part of his irony may be his baffled reaction to the profusion of his data.

One example of this blind alley into which his desperate empiricism led him has to do with the central problems of the origin and meaning of myth and its relation to ritual. His own thoughts on these vexed questions had undergone great changes over the years. It seems likely that his aversion to explicit theory caused him to be unaware of the conflict, even the contradiction, between some of the explanations he embraced. Frazer went out of his way to attack Jane Harrison, Gilbert Murray, and Francis Cornford, and ritualism as well; yet it was his early advocacy of ritualism—the idea that myth is best understood as the verbal correlative of subsequently disused ritual and is a secondary elaboration of ritual—that had won them over. His ingrained rationalism must have found inimical any explanation that emphasized motor needs over those of the intellect. The words he used in his attack, in the preface to his 1921 Loeb Classical Library edition of Apollodorus's grab bag of myths called *The Library*, are revealing: "By myths I understand mistaken explanations of phenomena, whether of human life or of external nature. Such explanations originate in that instinctive curiosity concerning the causes of things which at a more advanced stage of knowledge seeks satisfaction in philosophy and science, but being founded on ignorance and misapprehension they are always false, for if they were true, they would cease to be myths."

Although it may be impossible for a modern audience to suppress a smile at these words, their tone is exactly and characteristically that of the triumphant social science descendants of Bentham—those to whom we tend to offer lip service as the equal of the tribe of Coleridge, but whom literary intellectuals disparage or ignore in their reading lists and lectures. Yet this is by the way; let me return to Frazer's chastisement of the ritualists. He wrote:

> By a curious limitation of view, some modern writers would restrict the scope of myths to ritual, as if nothing but ritual were fitted to set men wondering and meditating on the causes of things. No doubt some myths have been devised to explain rites of which the true cause was forgotten; but the number of such myths is infinitesimally small, by comparison with myths which deal with other subjects and have had another origin. . . . The zealous student of myth and ritual, more intent on explaining them than on enjoying the lore of the people, is

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

too apt to invade the garden of romance and with a sweep of his scythe to lay the flowers of fancy in the dust. He needs to be reminded occasionally that we must not look for a myth or a rite behind every tale, like a bull behind every hedge or a canker in every rose.

In the space of a paragraph, myth as the careful but mistaken efforts at science on the part of primitive man has become instead a vast field of flowers of fancy growing wild and at random in the garden of romance. Frazer's metaphors and his tone *de haut en bas* show that his epistemology has led him on a wild-goose chase, and he seems to abandon any hope of making worthwhile sense of the fantastic diversity of myth and ritual he has so successfully displayed to the reader.

Many of Frazer's most eloquent pages, and much of his undoubted visionary force, were based on what might charitably be described as a sublime indifference to theory. In a sense he was a martyr to his own empiricism and to the scientism-at-large that prevailed at the turn of the century among the social sciences. For all that, he was a seer despite himself; readers have always esteemed him for the ways in which, perhaps mainly through the considerable resources of his verbal artistry, he was able to present comprehensibly, in a phrase or an image, a compelling sight of a mysterious past that is somehow alive within us all today.

The Punishment of Oedipus

EDWARD L. BURNETT

> . . . *after a tedious period of miserable wandering he found the termination of his wretched life.*
> —Bulfinch on the Oedipus legend

As an example of the cost of certainty,
the gods gave us Oedipus.
When the worst was known—
Laius murdered at the crossroads,
Jocasta hanging in incestuous royal chambers,
the tracks of blood now dry upon his cheeks—
he said no ordinary punishment would do,
that he had been saved
for some strange and terrible end.

He was wrong again, of course.
Think of the old man,
wandering and waiting years in darkness
for extraordinary retribution.

EDWARD L. BURNETT is a high school teacher in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In an Amber Mood

PAUL A. ZAHL

Recently, in a laboratory at Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology, I focused a magnifying glass on a clear marble-sized sphere in which a tiny fossil fly hung suspended. Its wings, so delicately veined, were parted as in a glide; its eyes, honeycombed by a thousand minute lenses, searched in all directions; its legs trailed as though prepared for a landing; and every hair and bristle of the neat body stood precisely in place.

This elegant piece of tea-hued amber, along with its elfin inclusion, was only one of several thousand stored in drawers stacked from floor to ceiling in the Museum's Department of Fossil Insects. Few were larger than the first joint of my thumb, and some had been machined into slices for mounting on microscope slides. In each was a fly, ant, grasshopper, beetle, or spider, all perfectly lifelike as though some magic wand had cast the spell of frozen sleep upon them. Awesome is hardly the adequate word, for this slumbering zoo had been impounded there, embalmed you might say, fifty million years earlier; yet its tenants looked singularly like the fly, ant, grasshopper, beetle, or spider in my own garden. Had evolution overlooked such genera during the intervening fifty thousand millennia?

At the beginning of that incomprehensibly long time span, certain pinelike trees in Baltic forests, presumably reacting to minor bruises or abrasions, exuded a salve of soft, gluey resin with a fragrance that attracted foraging ants and their ilk, and a swirl of minute insect flyers as well. Occasionally a hapless one would get stuck as on flypaper and then, squirming and thrashing, would sink ever more deeply into the coniferous mire. Drifting earthward, fragments of leaf, bark, or blossom—along with pollen dust and assorted debris—often became enmeshed too. When the resinous pools congealed, eventually to harden, they formed, in effect, sealed sarcophagi. Any enclosed mummy would await future biologists in search of clues to the nature of a biome that had passed into oblivion ages before man was even a glimmer in God's eye.

Addressing one such amber-embedded insect, Immanuel Kant once conjectured somewhat ingenuously, "If thou couldst but speak, little fly, how much more would we know about the past." One presumes that the renowned eighteenth-century philosopher returned to livelier issues raised in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, with no inkling that the little fly would one day be heard to whisper intelligible phonemes.

Fittingly, Kant was a native of Königsberg, an East Prussian city near the south Baltic coast, long known as the virtual capital of amberdom. Nearby beaches had for centuries provided the city with a seemingly inexhaustible supply of raw amber for use in fashioning necklaces, bracelets, brooches, cameos, beads. Guilds of amber cutters later became powerful in Danzig and in some cities of western Europe.

Amber mongering in northeast Germany seems to have begun around the twelfth or thirteenth centuries when certain crusaders, returning to their homeland penniless but still zealous, bound themselves into an ostensibly eleemosynary union called the Order of Teutonic Knights. In what appears to have been a continuing hard-line mood, they took

PAUL A. ZAHL has published numerous essays and book reviews in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. For many years he was senior scientist with the *National Geographic* and is currently a member of the National Geographic Society's Committee for Research and Exploration.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

over the amber-littered beaches and set up strict rules for all collecting, carving, and trade. So rigorous was enforcement that any apprehended smuggler was summarily hanged from the nearest tree.

Such stringency was in part related to, of all things, that solid symbol of faith, the rosary; for throughout Christendom no price was too high for a rosary strung with lucent amber beads. The knights and their descendants prospered until the emergence of Martin Luther. He and his Protestant adherents promptly rejected the rosary as a votive necessity. The knighthood along with its amber artisans—themselves now Protestant—refused to sell amber beads to Roman Catholics, and reciprocally Catholics would not buy from Lutherans.

The market declined, but not ruinously, because it was learned that in exotic lands far to the south, amber was also revered and applied in a ritual context. To be sure, the Moslems were infidels—but they were not Roman Catholics, so the amber trade picked up.

In those days, it was so easy to find amber on Baltic beaches, or to net it from a stormy surf, that overharvesting eventually led to a period of lean pickings. Resuscitation came when industrial speculators began to ponder the source of the previously bountiful treasure. Had not the Baltic area from ancient times undergone periodic geological shifts, alternately causing inundations and exposures, along with vast climatic and other ecological oscillations? Apparent too was that forest vegetation would disintegrate during any sustained period of flooding or numbing algidity, but not its time-resistant resin.

Only slightly heavier than water, hardened resin had just enough buoyancy to be rolled along river bottom or ocean floor by the push of subsurface currents. Since currents in the Baltic tend in a southward or easterly direction—that is, away from the Scandinavian landmass or from previously existing Baltic islands—it was inferred that an ever-continuing output of resin lumps from decaying forests had been eased toward, and finally washed up on, Baltic beaches to the east. It was clear too that layers of marl, sand, and other sedimentation must have periodically buried those shores and whatever littered them.

Evidence for the correctness of these assumptions appeared during the mid-1800s when dredgers, while clearing a shipping channel along the coast, encountered resinous lumps. Shafts were sunk on nearby shores where, fifteen or so feet down, even richer lodes were discovered. Mechanical scoops, graders, and sieves set to work and in 1855 harvested 1,000 pounds of fine-quality amber. With improved mining techniques, the annual recovery rose to 200,000 pounds. Amber was now big business. Each piece was meticulously scrutinized, and any showing signs of biological inclusions were sent to Königsberg specialists for study and cataloging. According to former Königsberg resident Willy Ley, the yield for 1876 was 600,000 pounds; for 1885, 900,000; and until 1914, about 1,200,000 annually. The bulk of this harvest was put on the world market to be purchased by a public quite unaware that amber fancying was by no means a German exclusive.

The antiquity of man's fascination with amber may be inferred from crude trinkets found in graves of northern Europe dating back to 8000 B.C., and from beads found in the tombs of ancient Mycenae. Thales of Miletus observed that amber rubbed against soft cloth would gather a magnetic charge that drew to itself bits of lint and other minutiae. Tacitus and Pliny the Elder also mention amber, speculating on its possible tree origin; and other Romans were well acquainted with its beauty and mystery, using it widely for jewelry and magical health amulets.

From *elektron*, the ancient Greek word for amber, we derive *electron* and *electricity*, although our English word comes from the Arabic *ambar*. The old German *Börnstein* (burn stone) acknowledges that amber will ignite when sufficiently heated, yielding fumes of pinewood fragrance.

Despite the speculations of Tacitus, Pliny, and the poet Martial, amber was generally regarded as a petroleum derivative or a mineral until the eighteenth-century Swedish botanist Linnaeus firmly defined its vegetative source. Amber comes in a wide variety of yellows, browns, reds, maroons, even blues—some clear like tinted glass, some clouded by variously colored suspensions of minute gas bubbles. In the trade, amber goes under such labels as clear, flom, bastard, foamy. Not gem-hard, the substance is warm to the touch, and is easily worked by wheel, file,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

drill, or buff polisher. A 5 to 8 percent content of succinic acid in Baltic amber is of verification value, for fakers have perennially sought to pass off colored glass or dyed plastic as the real thing. Chemical assay as well as infrared analysis help distinguish Tertiary amber from resins of more recent origin, such as copal, or from such geographically scattered lands as Africa, Burma, Canada, the Dominican Republic, Denmark, England, Indonesia, Mexico, the Philippines, Rumania, Sicily, the United States, and Zanzibar. But succinic amber, because of its traditional abundance on Baltic shores and the ease with which it was collected and studied there, remains the trade standard, and is acclaimed for the perfection of its biological inclusions.

In the early 1940s, World War II devastated the trove of rare and irreplaceable amber that for the previous several centuries had been so carefully sequestered in Königsberg's Royal Amber Museum. Many of the some 70,000 pieces there were destroyed or badly damaged by bombs and conflagration, or were simply lost. Miraculously, a few packets were whisked away in the nick of time, eventually to surface in museums in Poland, Germany, the United States, and certainly Russia. In their new repositories, the amber relics along with their sleeping beauties have, for now at least, found something akin to tranquillity.

Some of the refugees rest in Stuttgart's Museum of Natural History, in the heart of the Rhineland. I visited that museum in mid-January last year, during a snowfall so dense and blinding that I trudged around the building several times before at last locating the correct entrance.

Boots and overcoat shed and spectacles wiped, I was escorted down various hallways redolent with the museum smell of naphthalene, then into a laboratory smart with neat benches, complicated microscopes, bright lights. I was hardly seated when, like a jewelry salesman at Tiffany's, a curator placed before me a tray of maroon orbs and slides, some bearing labels dated 1874, 1895, 1909—obviously Königsberg originals. I asked the affable curator whether he had ever collected amber in the Königsberg area (now Kaliningrad). He gave me a quizzical look, muttering something to the effect that these days a West German would be somewhat less than persona grata there. Furthermore, he added, the peninsula was now a strictly off-limits Soviet naval zone.

Political matters seemed inconsiderable as the microscope magic-carpeted me back across vistas of paleontological time to a world of primordial flies, ants, grasshoppers, beetles, and spiders, all exquisitely perfect, just as at Harvard. One in particular riveted my eyes: a firefly of the family Lampyridae.

The specimen (actually a beetle, not a fly) was a female whose abdominal tip, during a dark night so distantly past as to be almost chimerical, had flashed out coded messages decipherable only by lady-minded gallants aflight through the same Tertiary gloom. I recalled that some years earlier I had witnessed such immemorial play among the fireflies of Jamaica's Blue Mountains, a habitat renowned for the abundance and diversity of its lampyrids. In wedlock, such couples, contemporary or ancient, were reenacting the most familiar of all biological scenarios: the fusing of two DNA storehouses to produce a third with genetic potentials slightly different from those of either parent. But even before this ritual of chromosomal blending occurred, mutational forces (thought to be radiant energy and/or exceedingly complex chemical interactions) may already have brought about subtle molecular alterations within the parental genes.

The firefly was set aside, and I adjusted the microscope on another amber piece, this one holding an ant of the sort I had seen at Harvard. Of the some six hundred hymenopterans (ants, wasps, and bees) cataloged from amber, well over half are formicids, implying a preponderance of ants in Tertiary times or, conceivably, their lack of skill in avoiding the treacherous resin. Some older amber ants (from the Cretaceous period) recently studied resemble, in some respects, today's wasps, lending support to the view long held by entomologists that ants were originally of wasp-like stock.

From Solomon's day onward, ants have impelled fascination because of the marvelous social principles that they and a few other insect groups have so neatly defined and so baffingly practiced. Not all their progeny go off on their own to repeat the parental pattern; in fact, most remain with the mother-queen to labor under her benign absolutism. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

paternal progenitor, once having performed as inseminator, is summarily discarded, while the resulting young, most of them neuter or infertile and often numbering in the thousands per family, are committed for life to excavating, gathering food, keeping the larder, nursemaiding, housekeeping, and generally pampering their grand progenitress. Self-determination among such workers vanishes. In some ant societies, certain individuals may become structurally specialized for constabulary work, at times even warfaring abroad. This so-called soldier caste, absent in early Tertiary amber, appears some twenty to thirty million years later, suggesting that intramural evolution among ants had not yet slowed to tortoise pace.

One is tempted to wonder whether the social system itself was not a factor in the ant's evolutionary slowdown. But then, the firefly is not a social insect, nor is societism a way of life for the opossum, the coiled oyster, the horseshoe crab, *Sphenodon,* or *Lingula.*

Mention of the latter groups relates to their status among the more striking of evolution's slowdowners. The early opossum's 60,000,000-year-old fossil bones, when reconstructed, yield a form differing little from the opossum of today. The coiled oyster of 150,000,000 or so years ago would have felt a familial closeness with those of today. The horseshoe crab's spiderlike forebears of even more ancient times were cast in a seemingly changeless mold. The lizardlike *Sphenodon,* today found living only in New Zealand, looks like its Jurassic progenitors; and the diminutive seashell *Lingula* of a mind-boggling 400,000,000 years ago proves, when compared with its modern counterpart, that those aeons produced little change in the genus. And any recitation of evolution's here-and-there laxity must include present-day microbial species whose look-alikes are presumed to have swarmed in the planet's waters a billion or more years ago, when life's profile was still exceedingly low. On the other hand, some single-cell organisms of that day mutated to establish multicellular lines, leading eventually to all subsequent "higher" forms, including the latter-day genus *Homo.*

Thus, evolutionary lethargy during certain periods and for certain groups is only one part of the picture. Others or their collaterals spurted ahead, sometimes at astonishing rates. Genetic alteration, presumed to be an entirely random process, seldom affects the individual as a whole, but rather a particular physiological or anatomical unit, organ, tissue type, or even single cell. If conformable to the environment, a gene-directed modification may strengthen the species, and indeed over a period of generations may impel the development of new species, genera, or families. On the other hand, a deleterious mutation may overspecialize a strain to spell vitiation or doom.

Weird examples of the latter among vertebrates are the classic saber-toothed tiger whose gigantic upper canines proved fatally cumbrous, and the bizarre Irish elk, whose nine-foot antler spread was wildly out of proportion to its owner's size and strength. Only fossils remain to verify the onetime existence of such freaks. Other instances include the titanotheres of Wyoming, which evolved from modest beginnings into creatures of startling size and form, then abruptly died out. But not so with the horse, which, moving up out of the shadows, evolved from a harelike miniature into our modern thoroughbred. Orthogenesis is the fancy name given to such seemingly straight-line progression.

Employing the broadest of brush strokes, one may draw the vertebrate evolutionary portrait: sharks and fishes radiating out in a thousand directions to produce hammerhead, coelacanth, tarpon, guppy, the while leaving a pyre of failures; amphibians, ranging from minute tree peepers to giant frogs and toads, along with a devastation of dropouts; reptiles, all sizes, legless, venomous, armored, thin-skinned, including that classic fizzle the dinosaur; birds, exhibiting a fantasy of beaks, talons, feathery cloaks of many colors, while keeping an archaeopteryx locked in the ancestral closet; whales, seals, walruses abandoning terra firma for the sea, and a reject pile of bones or their petrifications. And that wondrous Serengeti zoo of quadruped mammals—pachyderms, giraffes, gazelles, lions, leopards, cheetahs—grazing or stalking on a grassy graveyard of who knows how many checkmated forebears or collaterals.

From the mammalian line stepped the primate Adam, suddenly impelled to aspire toward levels beyond biochemistry, while his less-endowed, distant kinfolk—the gorillas, chimpanzees, monkeys—still carry on in what

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

one might, from on high, regard as a "we couldn't care less" way of life.

Leaving Stuttgart and its amber sarcophagi, I journeyed several thousand miles to the southwest, to lush Hispaniola, a Caribbean island shared by Haiti to the west and the Dominican Republic to the east, discovered by Columbus on his first voyage. Local legend tells of a young Carib chieftain boarding the *Santa Maria* and presenting the explorer with crude sandals, some fruit juice, and a piece of dirty stone that, when held to the sun, shone with soft yellow-brown translucence. Actually, the only amber reference Columbus makes in his diaries is mention of a string of amber beads from Europe that he presented as a gift to the natives. That in so doing he was carrying coals to Newcastle did not become known until several centuries later when clods of brown resinous material were found in sandstone cliffs high in the island's northern mountains.

As the story goes (no doubt as apocryphally as the chieftain one), sometime around 1940 the dictator Rafael Trujillo, shown chunks of brown "earth" from the mountains, took one look and responded impatiently, "Bring me gold, you foolish prospector, not dirty pebbles!"

"But, Your Excellency," the amber-bearer is said to have replied, "when this earth is polished, it is like gold you can see through."

"Gold . . . ?" the strong man mused, reacting hungrily to that magic word. Having by implication been given authorization to mine in the northern mountains, the petitioner bowed his way out of the throne room, but not before telling how Nero had once ordered some of his royal robes dyed to match the golden glow of his amber beads, and how gladiators once fought for apparel on which amber bits were sewn.

The treasure that was subsequently found abundant in those mountains was not the gold Trujillo had in mind—but go today to any of the Dominican Republic's many jewelry shops and you will note that the amber there commands auric prices.

In fact, the mountain cliffs yielded treasure far more precious: biological inclusions as ancient and perfect as any from the Baltic. These are now the specialty of a scholarly physician who, many years before my visit, set up private facilities for grinding and polishing any and every lump of amber that came to hand. Comfortably retired after a long career in medicine, this gentlemanly sexagenarian has accumulated several thousand remarkable examples of amber-preserved insects and plant fragments.

One afternoon as I studied the collection, its owner, hovering nearby, volunteered in Castile-flavored English: "Have you wondered how a fragile little insect caught in sticky resin retains such a lifelike flying pose, with wings not the least bit torn or shredded, with legs without a hint of haste or resistance?" He added that once he had placed a living fly on some fresh pine resin, and that within twenty seconds of premortem spasms the fly had thrashed itself into a hopeless mess.

Unwilling to abandon the subject, my friend advanced his theory. Wouldn't a puddle of ancient resin, accumulated over weeks and months, have developed a surface atmosphere of aromatic ketones, esters, alcohols, perhaps produced by bacteria metabolizing there? If so, any lured insect would have become initially dazed—intoxicated, you might say. Muscles would tend to relax, movements to slow, as the now unresisting body slowly sank into the mire to commence its fifty-million-year flight to nowhere.

As two great bulbous eyes of a lifelike praying mantis stared at me with compelling intensity from the depths of an exceptionally clear piece of polished amber, I had to admit the theory was impressive although I could not vouch for its scientific validity.

Years ago as a student I once incurred the displeasure of an entomology lab instructor who insisted on calling the praying mantis a *preying* mantis. He cited the creature's predacious character, also its fearsome front-leg spines obviously designed for preying rather than for praying. I countered with the reminder that at least one member of the Mantidae family bears the species name *religiosa*.

As to the presently glaring, amber-encased marvel, its forelegs were held in a distinctly prayerful attitude. But the instructor had had a point, for mantids are known not only for their pious posing but also for their fiercely vulpine temperament, ever alert to seize, kill, and devour any close-by moving thing, be it aphid, caterpillar, beetle, fly, or even mate.

At coupling time in the fall of the year, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

female mantid of today (and, noting the close resemblance in form and stance, unquestionably the Tertiary mantid too) will grab any wooer and, even during the sexual act, begin to annihilate the naïve gallant. Sinking her teeth and leg spikes first into his back, then his neck, she promptly decapitates the suitor. His copulatory movements continue nevertheless, for the ganglia controlling a mantid's muscles are located in the body, not the head—providing a singular case of sex not rearing its ugly head, for it has none.

As to any broad interpretation of the sexual drive within the biological realm, it is evident that the union of male and female—with all its courtship gimmickery and its resulting genetic fusion of dominant and recessive genes to create subtly varying offspring—was and still is, for virtually all animals as well as for most plants, the warp and woof of organic change, be it rapid, slow, or nearly stationary. Indeed, long before Freud chose to overlook sex's basic evolutionary core, the male-female *élan* had invested every aspect of ontogeny and phylogeny; had implacably branded a generation time limit on each and every individual.

This is not to say that some single-cell microbes cannot thrive asexually (albeit thereby lessening the probability of species change), or to deny that some lower forms practice both sexual and asexual reproduction, hermaphroditism, even parthenogenesis; it is only to assert that, in the main, gene mixing with its absolute reliance on generation turnover is nature's fundamental device for achieving diversity.

To explain phylogeny's irregular spurts and temporizings, we tend to fall back on classical Darwinism. That is, if ant, firefly, mantid, or indeed any biological line finds itself in an acceptable environmental circumstance, and as a consequence faces no serious survival threat, the drift will be toward evolutionary hesitancy. Should the milieu fluctuate radically, either of two options is open: adaptive change and species survival, or resistance and eventual extinction. If and when the new setting stabilizes (for century, millennium, or aeon), surviving lines will likewise tend toward equilibrium. Obviously from a statistical viewpoint, the frequency and number of reproducing offspring, and therefore the frequency and number of variations added to the gene pool, will affect the species' adaptive potential, and so play a key role in the rate and direction of the line's evolutionary course.

One method paleontologists use to assess the rate of evolutionary change is to count the number of new genera showing up in a given fossil record over a set period of time. For example, among the ammonites (invertebrates abundant in the sea 250 million years ago), a new genus seems to have appeared on an average of about every 20 million years; whereas among hoofed mammals of the Tertiary, one appeared every 6.5 million years. Having been subjected to more numerous or more radical environmental modifications, the hoofed mammals clearly diversified more rapidly than the ammonites, the latter living as they did in a relatively unchanging marine habitat. But averages are often less than definitive, for within any paleontological time span, there seem always to have been spells of exceedingly rapid species change, followed by periods of restraint, both reflecting degrees of ecological oscillation.

Tertiary ecosystems were by no means static: great meteorological disturbances and geological cataclysms came and went; cold might characterize one age, heat another, with their effects verbalized in the telltale language of rocks, fossils, and sedimentary stratifications.

Amber inclusions speak that language too. From embedded botanic fragments, paleobotanists can identify the parent plants and deduce the conditions under which they grew. In one or another of the five great epochs comprising the Tertiary period (each lasting up to ten million years), northernlike oaks, conifers, beeches, chestnuts, maples flourished. During others, the dominant flora were tropical cinnamons, palms, olives, sandalwoods, ferns. When cold, heat, desiccation, or flood devastated forests, some hardy plant and animal groups seemed always able to cope. When such forces regressed, giving way to more benign environmental moods, conforming vegetation appeared. There were, of course, lengthy intervening ages during which reseedings and back-and-forth animal migrations and crossbreedings occurred, with micro-niches often enabling small creatures like insects to find covert lairs where they persisted relatively unchanged, despite nutritional or climatic fluctuations all around.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Some insects living today in cold or hot climes resemble those trapped in amber fifty million years earlier. An ambered Baltic spiderweb is the virtual image of those being spun today far to the south. And to repeat, the Baltic's Tertiary fireflies were near-doubles of those flickering in present-day Jamaica.

Parenthetically, vertebrate remains do not as a rule appear in amber, for any creature larger than an insect would speedily extricate itself from the resin by sheer bulk and strength, leaving no sign of the brief encounter. Yet a few intriguing animal inclusions are on record: a tiny lizard almost identical to a species now residing in tropical Africa; also some rodent footprints, mammalian hairs, and bird feathers.

Given that organic change results from the interaction of dice-throw genetic variations and mercurial environments, are there any clues from amber to suggest some logic to the mystery of life's variegated burgeoning on this planet during the preceding three or so billion years?

The question is of cosmic proportions, and as taxing today as similar ones proposed a hundred years ago when Fitzroy and Wilberforce argued theology and causation with Darwin and his Huxleian supporters. Fitzroy, the skipper of H. M. S. *Beagle* as well as a Bible-quoting fundamentalist, appears to have been unable to accept his friend's gospel of variation, adaptation, and survival. Fitzroy settled the matter privately—by suicide, following the famous Oxford debates, thereby adding macabre support for Darwinism. Untold numbers of thoughtful men have wondered and agonized over the harshness of biological curbs, one being the brevity (for microbe, man, and between) of the individual's life-span. It is at once both obvious and bewildering that only enough time is allotted for male and female to mingle their germ plasms—then "Out, out, brief candle!" Once the flame has been passed on to the next relay runner, the empty-handed predecessor disappears, at least to our limited sensory awareness.

Since no major anatomical changes (including cranial, and presumably cerebral) have occurred in the genus *Homo* since Cro-Magnon days or even earlier, could it be that man is locked in an organic stasis analogous to that of those amber insects which fifty million years ago were impelled to accept something approaching an evolutionary status quo?

Elements of the modern temper, on the other hand, prefer to construe human evolution as gradually rising above the organic, perhaps to find assertion on planes of psychological, social, political, religious, metaphysical, or scientific aspiration. But man is still a flesh-and-blood creature, still subject to the same biochemical insistencies as all other protoplasm. This is not to ignore that we have somewhat extended our senses through electronic, acoustic, and optic instrumentation; have ameliorated some conditions of physical constriction by means of energy utilization, transportation, space venture, medical ingenuity, and the like; or, via geriatrics and social concern, have given ourselves a few extra years of cane-assisted life. Such ostensible progress, and the undoubted promise of more, is impressive, but it cannot begin to contend with nature's built-in limitations and ceilings.

Quite another story is the historical-cultural obeisance to so-called spiritual ways for relieving man's biological slavery and the tethers placed upon him by a gene-directed heredity. Variously phrased beliefs in a transcendental reality independent of matter are by no means to be underrated; but their influence on contemporary society has diminished, despite the proliferation of cults and primitivisms.

More fashionable these days is the persuasion that environmental pressures rather than innate characteristics determine the nature of behavior and achievement; that educational-indoctrinational means are to be sought for assuaging the dilemma faced by a heterogeneous, differentially reproducing society, with its natively acute, its natively middling, its natively supine constituency. On the other hand, my library shelves sag under the weight of such Jeremianic titles as *Whither Mankind, Nature and Man's Fate, Roads to Ruin, The Dice of Destiny, Mankind at the Crossroads*—all but one, not surprisingly, written by geneticists whose fixation on and impressive documentation of the germplasmic basis of organic structure and, more ruffling, of intelligence and behavior, cannot be ignored.

Inevitably one encounters the propriety of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

genetic control or its current synonyms, recombinant biology or genetic engineering. This is a subject to be approached with a degree of caution, for—assuming that man may someday learn to manipulate the DNA helix and be able thereby to mold the biological organism (including himself)—the hoary question persists: whose philosophy and whose motivation will determine the degree of control and its direction? Classically the grist of science fiction, the issue these days is being debated openly and heatedly not only in academe but in the highest legislative precincts as well.

My final encounter with amber involved a fist-sized chunk of the raw material that I purchased from a miner in Santiago de Los Caballeros, a town resting in the shadow of those amber-rich Dominican Republic cliffsides. Returning to the capital city of Santo Domingo, I went to a lapidary to have the amber cleaned and polished. A motorized emery wheel went to work. At length traces of green began to show through, becoming ever more distinct as a final wheel of rouged cotton buffing transfigured the thing into a gleaming jewel. The green inclusions were leaf fragments peering out for the first time in fifty million years on sky, sun, universe. It will take a paleobotanist to tell me whether—as with those amber-encased ants, fireflies, and mantids—the tree or shrub on which the leaves had grown resembled their present-day descendants.

When Someone Good Is Gone

(Adagio for river and tears)

BRAD REYNOLDS

Peace often only comes with sleep.
Down the river a motor churns,
The heron lifts his great gray wings.
Small waves rise among the tall
Sharp grass, curl against the bank.
A little boat fills quietly with rain;
One black leaf floating in the bow
Near a white sweater. There are no oars.
Sky and river turn against the light.
Trees begin to fall. Living apart
Can easily last this long.

BRAD REYNOLDS, S. J., is executive secretary for the national Jesuit Institute for the Arts.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

SONYA RUDIKOFF

In 1962 it was an arresting title for a play: *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* It had the distinctively cheeky tone of the sixties, that intimate and unbuttoned appropriation of high culture. Perhaps the Beat poets had initiated the tone and attitude, articulating something quite new in the society, which was barely visible or audible then. The affectionate mockery of culture had been heard before, but privately. All of a sudden this domesticated intellectual teasing was beamed out to the literate public on a large scale, as if family theatricals were hooked into a sound system, mass produced and mass distributed in almost the moment of their invention. Remember the sly, knowing buttons of those years? The jokes made instantly available to the millions? It was the same tone of the times that made Virginia Woolf's name a property of advertising and publicity, although Albee's play had nothing at all to do with her.

But did it really have nothing to do with Virginia Woolf—that modern writer whose fiction was so emblematic of the modernist movement that if you named Joyce and Proust with her (or added Eliot, Pound, or Gertrude Stein) you unfurled an avant-garde banner? The play itself was about the paralyzing effect of illusions and fantasies, among other things, so that in asking "Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf?" it really asked, "Who's afraid of the literary culture, of the Establishment, of eastern elitist power, of the New York intellectuals?" A young literary aspirant could feel afraid of New York, of Cambridge, of New Haven, of the pieties of Hamilton Hall, the Junior Fellows, the Elizabethan Club. That sense of exclusion was felt by generations of young Americans, as when the academic literary culture resisted the ambitions of Lionel Trilling, say, or Saul Bellow, or other young Jews, or when it resisted the claims of R. P. Blackmur, Kenneth Burke, and other young men or women from "the provinces." That old literary culture was durable, protected in the academic world, in literary journals, and in the English departments of those New England colleges like the one in Albee's play. It was that same genteel culture which could exclude a woman from a little tea-drinking literary club in a little eighteenth-century house at Dartmouth, even if she were a writer known and published in the world outside. Who would have imagined that in 1962 Virginia Woolf as a literary figure would be made to stand for that old culture? It was to be only the beginning of the unsettling developments of the sixties.

Although Virginia Woolf was never asked to join the board of the London Library—a distinct snub—she was not really excluded by the literary culture of her time. Despite her avant-garde intentions, she was actually a central part of the literary culture, having been born into it as the daughter of Leslie Stephen, and having begun quite early to review regularly for the *Times Literary Supplement* and other such journals. From 1915 until her death in 1941, there was hardly a year when something of hers did not appear before the public, whether a novel, story, or collection of essays. In the twenties there were interviews in French journals, reviews in the important English and American journals, American editions of her novels, and numerous English, American, German, and French critical studies. Her serious aesthetic purposes

SONYA RUDIKOFF's articles have appeared in *Commentary*, the *Hudson Review*, *Dissent*, and other journals.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SPLENDID STUDIES FOR
Sf AFICIONADOS

FUTURE PERFECT

American Science Fiction of the Nineteenth Century

Revised Edition

H. Bruce Franklin. Acclaimed as both a work of creative scholarship and a wonderful anthology of stories, the first edition of *Future Perfect* was responsible for the acceptance of science fiction as serious literature and as a major literary form in 19th-century America. Now fully revised, the latest edition of this classic includes sections on Washington Irving, Jack London and others. $15.00 cloth; $4.95 paper

SCIENCE FICTION

History • Science • Vision

Robert Scholes and Eric S. Rabkin. Charting the territory where imagination meets the intellect, the authors pinpoint the scientific discoveries, social trends and literary techniques that have shaped the world of Sf masters from Shelley and Wells to Clarke and Le Guin. With bibliographies and critical readings of 10 classic science fiction novels. $12.95 cloth; $2.95 paper

1478
1978

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
Publishers of Fine Books
for Five Centuries
200 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were widely recognized before her death and did not have to wait decades for discovery. In the years since her death, there has been a steady annual appearance of works by or about Virginia Woolf: the many biographies and critical studies in the forties—those of David Daiches, Joan Bennett, R. L. Chambers, Bernard Blackstone—were followed in the fifties by those of James Hafley, Aileen Pippett, and others, and an immense Woolf bibliography in 1957. Publications of portions of her diary in 1953, of her correspondence with Lytton Strachey in 1956, and, at intervals from 1960 to 1969, of the five volumes of Leonard Woolf's autobiography added more information and perspective. The sixties and seventies have provided a similar abundance of critical articles and studies about Virginia Woolf, enough to require a revision of the bibliography within ten years of its publication. This is hardly the indifference or neglect that avant-garde writers expect to meet.

A widespread interest in the cultural life of the early twentieth century has also enriched the study of Virginia Woolf by generating new works on her various milieus: social histories, biographies, and examinations of aesthetic movements like Vorticism; books on Leslie Stephen, Lady Ottoline Morrell, the Webbs, G. E. Moore, Bertrand Russell, D. H. Lawrence, Keynes, E. M. Forster; the large biography of Lytton Strachey and the new material on Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicolson. Other renewed interests—in the early Auden, the early Spender, *l'entre deux guerres*, the poets of the Spanish Civil War—also touch upon Virginia Woolf, who, as a writer and, with Leonard Woolf, publisher at the Hogarth Press, seemed to be at the center of English cultural life. Bloomsbury itself as a subject and a symbol has emerged for major scrutiny—that setting in which Virginia Woolf was such a prominent figure, to some a kind of priestess, to others a *belle dame sans merci* or a bratty madonna. Her work and her place have received the attention demanded and deserved. She wrote for a literate audience, and she expected to be read, no matter what her avant-garde aesthetic might suggest to the contrary. Even in her own lifetime, as the diary and letters make clear, she had an entourage of friends, relatives, and acquaintances, a circle of people who could read and respond, whose opinions she anxiously awaited, whose praise she needed, whose criticism she dreaded. When the Battle of Britain isolated the Woolfs from their friends, no small part of its effect on her was the loss of social reverberations. Although she had often feared the opinions of "Morgan," "Desmond," and "Nessa," when those responses could not easily be heard she felt weirdly cut off from life.

Virginia Woolf's place in the modernist canon is securely established, and her reputation a matter of general agreement. Now Ivy League colleges and large universities follow the early example of Bennington and other advanced institutions by including Virginia Woolf in their ordinary curricula, along with Proust, Joyce, and the rest of that avant-garde. Surely there is little left to be said about Virginia Woolf and the interior monologue, Virginia Woolf *und die Konzeption der Zeit;* her contribution to the lyrical novel, to *le roman anglais* or *le roman psychologique;* her use of the *bateau ivre*, of *Impressionismus und Expressionismus;* her ideas of time, consciousness, *die Sprache, die Wirklichkeit;* her philosophy, *die Frau in ihren Werken, la durée Bergsonienne,* the *problème du moi;* and other matters of interest to Woolf scholars. It might seem that acceptance and approbation had settled Virginia Woolf's eminence for all time, preserving its early freshness with the fixative of scholarship.

Suddenly, in the early seventies, something curious occurred, a phenomenon that emerged into general awareness in an academic world quite unprepared for it. English departments were said to be offering not only English literature and American literature, but now a third subject, known as Virginia Woolf, and it was that third subject which excited the greatest interest. Suddenly the reputation of Virginia Woolf was not what it had been comfortably thought to be. Now, subtly, a new and different Virginia Woolf was being read and talked about; there was a different context in which to read her work, another use to be made of it. Perhaps the very widespread acceptance of an initially "difficult" writer had obscured the phenomenon until it became explicit in 1975. And, possibly most important of all, there were different readers; those who had first discovered and praised and analyzed the early works were not the ones who were now discovering them. Vir-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ginia Woolf's experiments, her arguments for nonmaterial reality in such essays as "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown," and her interest in states of consciousness had been quite congenially welcomed into the modern literature of our time when the Virginia Woolf phenomenon occurred. At first the revival, the new reputation of this once advanced writer did not provoke much notice because the struggle over her work, the defense of it, and of the avant-garde altogether, were assumed to have already achieved success.

What should be made of such shifts in assessment, such changes in the character of reputations? No major museum retrospective exhibitions or high market prices define the posthumous canonization of writers. No stupefying one or two million dollars will be paid for a Woolf manuscript, unlike a Pollock or a Rothko painting. And there has been no film of *To the Lighthouse* with Liv Ullmann as Mrs. Ramsay! Still, publication of books about Virginia Woolf was accelerated in the late sixties and early seventies, countless manuscripts about her were begun, and sales of her previously published works increased substantially. *A Room of One's Own,* for example, had been a favorite for many years, but its sales doubled in 1970 and by 1975 had multipled fifteen times. Neither during her lifetime nor since her death has Virginia Woolf figured in the celebrity culture, and no silk screen by Andy Warhol saturates the world with her face. So it was amusing to note the unexpected appearance of the Virginia Woolf T-shirts, printed with one of her charming 1903 photographs, and often worn by young women whose hair is twisted in the same Grecian knot. As we know, Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart have survived translation into the language of T-shirts, but whether Joyce, Eliot, or Kafka would be accommodated so well is a question.

Of more significance is the continuing publication of unknown Woolf manuscripts, scattered unknown reviews, sketches, and other material, complete editions of material known in expurgated versions, and the scholarship about them. Added to the nine novels and the six other books of essays, criticism, biography, and short fiction published before her death, and the continuing publication of letters and diaries, the projected collection of Virginia Woolf's work is likely to go beyond fifty volumes. Another kind of significance may be found in the way the Modern Language Association has officially made room for Virginia Woolf. For several years there had been some interest in a Woolf Seminar, and finally, at the 1976 meetings, an entire day was devoted to her late work, to Leonard Woolf, and to contemporary estimates of her work. Then the newly established Virginia Woolf Society was convened, with election of officers, discussion of goals, and plans for future activities (among them a centenary celebration in 1982). Even more important was the vote of MLA members recommending that the Virginia Woolf Seminar should be accorded Discussion Group Status, and thus become an enduring structured forum for scholarly discussion. At the 1977 MLA meetings, the Newberry Library gave a party for the Virginia Woolf Society, and the papers at the Woolf sessions were chosen to carry forward some of the themes of Woolf criticism.

These and related events are significant by implication; they indicate the depth and range of serious interest in Virginia Woolf. This interest is exemplified by the number of scholars at work on the subject or interested in regularly listening to papers on it and in using insights from the ensuing discussions in their teaching of English literature, and the number of scholars sponsoring doctoral dissertations on the subject, and ultimately, perhaps, revising their estimates of literary relationships. The formal creation of a society devoted to a literary figure is thus a kind of predictive index to that figure's scholarly weight. Every conceivable kind of society can be included in MLA listings if enough people can support or use it—from a Brontë society to a Wallace Stevens society, from Dickens to Doris Lessing to East German literature. When such a society is formed, when its subject enjoys Discussion Group Status, more permanent structures develop; then, clearly, a sufficient number of people are interested in meeting with one another, furthering the knowledge of their subject, and stimulating the interest of publishers, foundations, and curriculum committees. Journals and newsletters follow or precede these events—in this case the *Virginia Woolf Miscellany* and the *Virginia Woolf Quarterly* already existed—and special additional conferences are planned to be held on occasions other than MLA

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

meetings, as has happened with the Woolf gatherings at Santa Cruz, Harvard, Bucknell, Princeton, and abroad. Papers are read at these conferences, information exchanged, and scholars learn about work in progress. Other activities follow: plays about Virginia Woolf, money raising for presentation of plays such as her *Freshwater*, performances of the Pulitzer Prize–winning song cycle, *From the Diary of Virginia Woolf*. Word gets around of new editions of already published works or editions of the excised portions of familiar works, such as Mitchell Leaska's 1977 edition of *The Pargiters*, the 1880 novel-essay portion cut from *The Years*, and the first volume of a new edition of all the diaries, complete and unexpurgated. Papers from Woolf meetings and seminars are then collected for publication, as in the New York Public Library's Winter 1977 *Bulletin*, which included papers from a previous Woolf seminar as well as important textual material from the library's outstanding Berg Collection. On its cover is one of those amusing photographs of a dour Leslie Stephen and the family mugging before the camera, recalling Leonard Woolf's caption for a similar garden photograph: "The Stephen family on the brink of the workhouse." An issue of the *Miscellany* might provide someone's report of a visit to St. Ives or someone's version of a map of Mrs. Dalloway's London. In other words, it creates a world.

Some further outlines may suggest the size and scope of the—what shall it be called, a Woolf revival? Or is it merely the conjunction of newly available material with the domestication of the old avant-garde? The two-volume biography of Virginia Woolf by Quentin Bell, published in 1972, was a project that might be said to have had its inception in 1907, when the aunt wrote a series of family reminiscences for her as yet unborn nephew (included in *Moments of Being*, a new collection of unpublished autobiographical writings). Obviously much of the material and many of the now numerous recollections and new perspectives on Virginia Woolf would not have appeared before Leonard Woolf's death in 1969: some of the material was given to libraries by his executrix, stimulating biographical speculation and revelation that would not have been undertaken earlier. Leonard Woolf has himself become a new subject of interest, as indicated by the renewed attention to his own work. And his crucial role in Virginia's life is also a subject, as is the recent study of the two Woolfs called *A Marriage of True Minds*. Of Old Bloomsbury, hardly anyone but Duncan Grant, now ninety-one, is still alive, and more material about that circle has become available too. The Stephen house in Hyde Park Gate has not yet been enshrined as "the birthplace," but Virginia's and Leonard's house in Rodmell, Sussex—Monk's House—has begun to be the focus of a certain veneration. Leonard Woolf lived there until his death, keeping all the furniture and maintaining the gardens. In 1972 the University of Sussex obtained the property and has since rented it to interested parties. One of the most active Woolf scholars, Lucio P. Ruotolo of Stanford University, spent a year in the house, and at the 1976 MLA meeting he showed slides of the house and garden, having earlier sent a bulletin on them to the *Miscellany*. Despite the crowded, airless room, the audience sat fascinated. There was the kitchen with its Aga, the dining room with the needlepoint chairs designed by Vanessa Bell, the furniture from Roger Fry's Omega Workshops. There were the decorative mantels and panels by Vanessa and Duncan Grant, the bathroom and central heating installed with money made by Virginia in 1925 and noted in the *Diary*, the pictures, piano, bookshelves, enameled tables, garden statuary, the study, the bedroom, the chest from Ceylon labeled L. S. Woolf, and the River Ouse where she drowned herself, fifteen minutes away but not visible either from the garden or the house—everything known to close and devoted readers of her letters and diary. As the slides presented first one and then another recaptured scene, Professor Ruotolo could report what it felt like to sit on that chair, to play the piano, to walk out through this door into the green garden. When someone asked to see again one of the slides of the bathroom showing the mirror with the shell-encrusted frame, it was a fellow Woolfian equally attentive and informed, citing a diary reference and wondering whether it was the same shell mirror that Virginia had worked on!

Not surprisingly, this Virginia Woolf phenomenon appears to some observers excessive, cultist, or unacceptably cozy. The tri-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW FROM COLUMBIA

DEAR RUSSELL—DEAR JOURDAIN

I. Grattan-Guinness, Editor

This unique book draws primarily on Bertrand Russell's unpublished material, especially his correspondence from 1902 to 1919 with his student Philip Jourdain. The contents of these letters, published here for the first time, shed new light on the development of Russell's ideas in mathematical logic. $20.00

CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD

MYTH AND ANTI-MYTH

Paul Piazza

Examining all the various Isherwoods from the Herr Issyvoo of *The Berlin Stories* to the cult figure of the California homosexual scene, Piazza illuminates the evolution of this remarkable novelist's dramatic rebellion, the anti-myth that formed the core of his work. $12.50

ESCAPE FROM THE SELF

A STUDY IN CONTEMPORARY POETRY AND POETICS

Karl Malkoff

Using two popular prophets of liberation from the self—Norman O. Brown and Marshall McLuhan—to provide cultural context, Malkoff explores the thesis that the characteristic common to most contemporary American poetry is its abandonment of the conscious, rational self as the inevitable perspective from which reality must be viewed. $12.50

JOHN BERRYMAN

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE POETRY

Joel Conarroe

The poetry of John Berryman is highly personal, reflecting the poet's flamboyant, drama-filled life which ended with his suicide in 1972. This book takes a thoughtful look at every aspect of Berryman's accomplishments, clarifying the complex relationship between his ultimately liberating work and his private torments.

Columbia Introductions to Twentieth-Century American Poetry $10.95

To order send check or money order to **Dept. JN.** Individuals must enclose payment. Institutions may request billing.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS

Address for orders:
136 South Broadway, Irvington, New York 10533

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

umphant scholarly embrace of Bloomsbury as a subject has unfortunately emphasized the self-consciousness so rampant in the group, and Virginia Woolf's reputation has suffered from it. Those interminable attempts to pin down who exactly began "Bloomsbury," and when and in which house on what square, and who represented the first wave and who the second, and what their relations were with the "Cropheads" and the "Neo-Pagans," and which of them was a genius, and who was or was not admitted to the charmed circle, and the preoccupation with buggery—there *is* something irritating about it. One is immediately reminded of Rebecca West's impression that they were all Verdurins who thought they were the Guermantes! That obsessive anatomizing of the milieu began early, long before it provoked *Scrutiny*'s fury. It could be found in the first days, as recounted by the young Virginia Stephen, and in the contributions she read to the Memoir Club in the twenties. These are obviously written for a difficult audience, and they combine very expertly the wish to shock and wound with the wish to conceal—a characteristic of Bloomsbury's showy liberation. The scholarly attempt to define that milieu which was so important to the Woolfs has relied perhaps too much on the ostensible accuracy of the recollections. Actually, some of the "facts" often cited seem, in the context, to have been invented; Virginia Woolf even suggests that she may have only imagined the famous scene in which Lytton Strachey, ushering in the "new freedom," used the word "semen" in her presence.

Of course there is a "Woolf industry," with study of sources, examination of influences, tracking down of details, antecedents, devices, and the rest; but it is not an industry invented by Woolf scholars. Indeed there is hardly an advanced modern writer of the heroic period who has not been steered through the same perilous passage. The Joyce Society, for example, is even more vigorous in promoting its subject, celebrating its famous "Bloomsday," explicating texts, sponsoring meetings, and furthering publications with a zeal that would have been inconceivable to Joyce himself. The Lawrence scholars, the Eliotists, the Pound people, and the rest are notoriously vigilant and indefatigable in making claims for their subjects and promoting them. It is in the perspective of this kind of contemporary investigation that we see how Virginia Woolf's once arcane literary concerns have all become subjects for research—such matters as the depiction of a new kind of time or reality, or the world without a self, or some reality intensely united with the self, or a boundless consciousness. Not insignificant in the recent Woolf scholarship—and quite prominent in recent literary studies—is the acutely sophisticated use of sources, material, hypotheses, the sense of contemporaneity in the subject. Revisions in the reputation of Virginia Woolf are being made by readers and scholars intimately familiar with the way such estimates have been changed by recent literary or psychological theories, recent social or intellectual history, or recent political preoccupations. Everyone nowadays is sophisticated and knowledgeable. And the fascination with the Woolf milieu expresses the same investigative impulse that urges some observers to define the New York intellectuals or the Berkeley milieu, to fix who did or did not belong to the "old Village" or to Provincetown, Paris, Vienna, Berlin, or whatever ambience is to be documented.

The "industry," the revival, the entire phenomenon could not have proceeded at all, of course, without the incredible productivity of that troubled and harassed writer, Virginia Woolf. In a career beginning in 1905 and ending only with her suicide in 1941, she did a startling amount of work, filled thirty-three volumes of a diary, and wrote some six thousand letters as well. All this writing—the fiction and criticism in long morning stints, the letters and diary after tea or dinner—was punctuated by several bouts of severe and incapacitating mental illness that lasted for months at a time or longer; by countless bouts of headache, cold, menstrual difficulties, influenza, insomnia, dental problems, ordinary depression and anger; by weeks of resting in bed to avoid more serious illnesses. It was punctuated also by travel, tea parties, luncheons, dinners; by daily long walks of six or eight miles in country or town, bicycling, picnics, excursions with Leonard to Labour party conferences; by work at the Hogarth Press, editing, tying up parcels, proofreading, setting type, binding books; by needlework, occasional baking, shopping, weekly trips to London, visiting friends and relatives, having

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

visitors. Some of the novels were totally rewritten three or more times, some lost huge chunks of material (*The Years*, for example), and others were extensively revised. Who would think that this fragile, suffering, neurasthenic writer could have summoned the energy, the persistence, the control, the devotion, the self-denial? Who could have imagined her dedication to her writer's craft, given the intensity of her distress?

Some observers have pettishly suggested that the new assessment of Virginia Woolf and the entire Woolf industry have been contrived in a feminist conspiracy. It is true, of course, that we have become much more aware of Virginia Woolf as a figure, in the same sense that Jane Austen has become a figure, and Margaret Fuller, and not unlike the way Gide, Mann, Kafka, James, Stendhal, Henry Adams, and others have severally and individually solicited as much attention in their emblematic as in their literary accomplishments. It is not uniquely characteristic of women writers. Virginia Woolf's feminism, pacifism, interest in socialism, her skeptical and satiric apprehension of life and its social texture, now make available a literary figure very different from the one previously known; but of even greater importance is the fact that the books themselves are actually being read differently, by different readers, and in different circumstances. Not everyone shares the new perspective, perhaps because the old one was not entirely lost. For example, most readers of the first two volumes of the letters edited by Nigel Nicolson and Joanne Trautmann were moved by a specifically literary appreciation for their humor, perception, general social interest, and epistolary qualities—as were Eudora Welty and Samuel Hynes. Comments on the Bell biography were marked almost entirely by a response to the artistic dedication, the hard work, the brilliant and gifted and tragic life—as was Cynthia Ozick's long, sympathetic essay in *Commentary* and, indeed, as Bell's book was. The earlier Virginia Woolf—avant-garde writer, attentive to sensibility, consciousness, hidden realities; the late Georgian literary figure, the essayist and the consummate artist; the thirties figure, charming, witty, concerned—is the figure they responded to. And much of the recent work, such as Mark Goldman's *The Reader's Art: Virginia Woolf as Literary Critic* or Avrom Fleishman's *Virginia Woolf: A Critical Reading*, is similarly not attuned to the new perspective.

Some new Woolf scholars discern a radical political insight in almost everything she wrote, sensing not merely feminism but a more comprehensive question about the entire society. Contributors to the New York Public Library *Bulletin* are all touched by this orientation: thus *The Years* is seen by one critic in its relation to fascism and authoritarian society, by another as a satiric landscape of the symbolic monuments of capitalism, and by still another in its aspect of *Götterdämmerung*. In this reading, *Mrs. Dalloway*—and its party and the complicated contrast between the society hostess and the shell-shocked war veteran's suicide—is an imaginative device for social and political revelation rather than the class anthem it was often taken to be. *To the Lighthouse* has been read in a similar fashion, not only for its poetic beauty or its experimental voices, or its autobiographical material, but with attention to the complex politics of the Ramsays' marriage, to Lily Briscoe and the woman's relation to society and marriage, with implications about sexuality and art. *Jacob's Room*, *The Waves*, *The Voyage Out*, *Night and Day*, and *Between the Acts* have all been illuminated as novels of radical consciousness, not propaganda but imaginative representations. *Between the Acts*, with its dogged interest in a country pageant, the world of villagers, vicar, county families, and the rest, was once thought of as an especially striking example of Virginia Woolf's remote aestheticism and elitism, because this last unfinished novel failed to bring in the Battle of Britain then raging. The newer view of it (recalling to the reader Jane Austen's failure to bring in the Napoleonic Wars) suggests that the reproduction of social reality was not what was being attempted. Critics such as Jane Marcus, Margaret Comstock, Sallie Sears, Joanna Lipking, Mitchell Leaska, and others argue that Virginia Woolf's fiction is both more imaginative and more revolutionary: "a bandage and a banner, plastering the wounds of the old world while heralding the birth of a new." Carolyn Heilbrun pointed to the politics of marriage in *To the Lighthouse* in 1973, and now Jane Marcus argues that *The Years* is a "threnody for the dying Victorian patriar-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The 1977 Phi Beta Kappa Book Awards

The Ralph Waldo Emerson Award

PEASANTS INTO FRENCHMEN: THE MODERNIZATION OF RURAL FRANCE, 1870–1914. *By Eugen Weber. Stanford University Press. $20.*

Citation: "This is a book that seriously shakes accepted views about the unity of the French nation by demonstrating that the peasant masses, until very late in the nineteenth century, did not read or speak French and did not identify themselves in any serious way with the national state. Mr. Weber's reconstruction of the realities of peasant life is an example of social history at its best, based upon meticulous scholarship and superseding anything that has been written in this field. He has given us an enormously learned but beautifully written book, which is filled with intriguing detail about markets and fairs, feasts and festivals, the ways in which the folk imagination transformed political and economic realities into proverbs and tales, and the role of music as a vehicle for bringing city tastes to the village. He describes the crises at the end of the century in which local cultures died as a result of the relentless march of modernization. The book is a major contribution to French history, and it is bound to influence the historiography of other countries."

The Christian Gauss Award

DOSTOEVSKY: THE SEEDS OF REVOLT, 1821–1849. *By Joseph Frank. Princeton University Press. $16.50.*

Citation: "Envisioning Dostoevsky's genius as essentially constituted in 'his ability to fuse his private dilemmas with those raging in the society of which he was a part,' Joseph Frank offers a brilliant historical and critical reconstruction of the complex character of the Russian novelist's early career. In so doing he defines the chief motives that he will explore in the subsequent volumes of what unquestionably will take its place as one of the major literary biographies of our time. But *Dostoevsky: The Seeds of Revolt, 1821–1849* is more than a prelude to the forthcoming treatment of the later phases of the novelist's career. Through the breadth of his inquiry into Dostoevsky's early life—an inquiry at once systematic, acute, and meditative—Professor Frank develops a bold emphasis on Dostoevsky's spirituality and its implication in the social-cultural dimensions of post-Napoleonic Russian literature and literary life. He succeeds not only in correcting and transcending the narrow but influential Freudian interpretation of the novelist but ultimately in suggesting the growth of a profound intimacy between modern history and modern literary art. His book is of cardinal significance both for readers of Dostoevsky and for those who seek a deeper comprehension of the meaning of modern letters."

The Phi Beta Kappa Award in Science

THE HIGH FRONTIER: HUMAN COLONIES IN SPACE. *By Gerard K. O'Neill. Morrow. $8.95.*

Citation: "The author, a distinguished physicist on the faculty of Princeton University, first presented his concept of a space colony at a student seminar that he conducted in 1969. Since then, without in any way diminishing his research effort in his major field of developing and studying collision-beam storage-ring techniques in high energy physics, Professor O'Neill has been steadily refining his ideas on the colonization of space, so that today he can present a very convincing argument for the possibility and desirability of installing human communities in orbit between the earth and the moon. He has even persuaded NASA to fund research into the planning of orbital manufacturing facilities. Professor O'Neill has written an enormously stimulating and exciting book, refreshingly optimistic and splendidly informative; his imaginative yet disciplined speculations provide a welcome relief from the current visions of gloom."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

chal family," an "opera for the oppressed." Clearly, in this perspective, Avrom Fleishman's observation that *The Years* exhibits "antipathy toward traditional masculine-oriented institutions" is hardly the damaging criticism it might once have been. Obviously such institutions are exactly the stimulus for the revolutionary consciousness these critics discern! And the resources of all recent criticism are summoned to buttress this view, as for example in a look at the name "Pargiter" (the family's name in *The Years*), which in the plural was the novel's original title. "Pargiting" is an ancient word meaning plastering, patching, hiding, covering up, the painting and plastering of cosmeticians and perhaps embalmers, with rich, important associations of deceit, travesty, exploitation, and of repair, renewal, reconstruction, and art. Mitchell Leaska and Jane Marcus have made liberal use of these significations in understanding *The Years* as a social drama of the "ruinous house" that patching and mending will not save from downfall, like the patriarchal family and capitalist culture suffering from "internal rot and external warfare." In the light of contemporary feminism and contemporary Marxist thought, this kind of reading is extremely interesting and, not surprisingly, gives readers of Virginia Woolf the feeling that they have uncovered a new writer, which they have.

Perhaps earlier readers were too beguiled by her graceful tours around the library, her essays, Bloomsbury, the cozy world of lunches and teas, of universities, squares, and servants, where there were always links to the great world and always some niece of an earl to be seen. The beautiful Julia, the Duckworths, the Pattle sisters, Lady Colefax, Lady Ottoline Morrell, Vita Sackville-West, ancient lineage, great houses, society—even in the Bloomsbury version, which was a little grubby, this vanishing and vanished world seems to have exerted such charm or provoked such fury that perhaps Virginia Woolf's own critical relation to it was ignored. She herself did not slash the Sargent portrait of Henry James or throw the hatchet in Asquith's carriage; but her writing life began in 1905, coinciding with the heroic phase of the suffrage movement, the time of pillarbox explosions, demonstrations, hunger strikes, police brutality. The young Virginia Stephen or the newly married Virginia Woolf had only to read the newspaper to be, as we say nowadays, "radicalized," after a girlhood in the age of Fabianism, the "new woman," and G. B. Shaw. Later, Bloomsbury and the alumni of the famous "Apostles" created a masculine, exclusionary world despite their iconoclasm and verbal and sexual liberality. The young Virginia Stephen might be beautiful and gifted, but she was irrelevant to them, and she realized it. Her feminism began early, as the letters indicate. With mother, father, and brother dead, with her sister married and a new life to be made, she was acutely interested in the question of how women should live and what they should live for, and in socialism, in radical possibilities, in the education of the working class. These matters were to be at the center of her work for more than thirty years—how could anyone have thought that she cared only for interior monologue or Bergsonian time?

It was a mistake easily made, and shared by all those who were also to be surprised by the feminism of the seventies. In 1938 or 1948, even in 1958 and 1968, the feminism of *Three Guineas* could seem absurd, excessive, and outdated. Yet there is hardly an argument, a quotation, a reference that has not been echoed, supported, and substantiated countless times in the feminist writing of the present. Apart from some details and a certain resistance to interruption in the argument, it is a book that any serious, thoughtful feminist might now be proud to claim, more vivid than the "persuasive," "charming," "delightful" *A Room of One's Own*, with its prescription of £500 a year and privacy. How those goals conjure up a vanished world! Fifty years ago in England such an income meant something, when perhaps 80 percent of the population still lived on wages of £100 a year, and when less than 3 percent lived very comfortably on £700. *A Room of One's Own*, published significantly just two days before the Great Crash, merely sought a modest place in contemporary society for women with literary ambitions. It mused about Shakespeare's sister, summoned the shades of Aphra Behn and other historical figures, and offered Coleridge's idea that "a great mind must be androgynous"—a novel idea that could nevertheless be accepted at the time. *Three Guineas*, less than a decade later, dis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Augustana
COLLEGE

ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS 61201

ZETA CHAPTER OF ILLINOIS
PHI BETA KAPPA

For more than a century, Augustana College has been committed to a program of excellence in the liberal arts.

The College was founded by graduates of European universities, and throughout its history has maintained a close relationship to the Lutheran Church.

The climate of the campus today reflects this historic concern for a superior academic program as well as a sense of values.

THOMAS TREDWAY, *President*

Austin College

People, values and ideas are important at Austin College. That's why Austin College offers a people- and idea-oriented education, and that's why Austin College enjoys an enviable reputation as an outstanding liberal arts college.

What does that mean to you as a prospective student? It means that at Austin College you are encouraged to look inward . . . to develop your ideas and values as you encounter those of others . . . to examine the exciting possibilities for your personal development . . . to achieve your potential as an individual.

If people, values and ideas are important to you, write:

Admissions Office
Austin College
900 North Grand
Sherman, Texas 75090
(214) 892-9101

The American University
Washington, D.C. 20016

Puts opportunities in your hands. . .

. . .the opportunities afforded by studying in the nation's capital where the governmental, cultural, scientific and historical institutions of the city supplement the traditional academic disciplines.

Major divisions of the university are:
College of Arts and Sciences
- Seventeen departments covering the Arts, Humanities, and Natural, Mathematical, Computer, and Social Sciences
- School of Communication
- School of Education

College of Public Affairs
- School of Government and Public Administration
- School of International Service
- Center for the Administration of Justice
- Center for Technology and Administration

Washington College of Law
School of Business Administration
Lucy Webb Hayes School of Nursing
Division of Continuing Education

For further information

Phone (202) 686-2215
or write to Box P-AX, The American University
Office of Admissions, Financial Aid, and Veterans Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20016

an equal opportunity/affirmative action university

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Alliance is more:

- INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS
- POLISH AND SLAVIC STUDIES

Alliance College
Cambridge Springs, PA 16403

- Evangelical in theology
- Liberal arts in curriculum
- Moderate in size
- Friendly & qualified in faculty
- Interdenominational in scope
- Balanced in social standards

Bryan College
FULLY ACCREDITED
Dayton, Tenn. 37321

Brooklyn College

Undergraduate and graduate study through the Schools of Education, Humanities, Performing Arts, Science, and Social Science, the School of General Studies, and the New School of Liberal Arts.

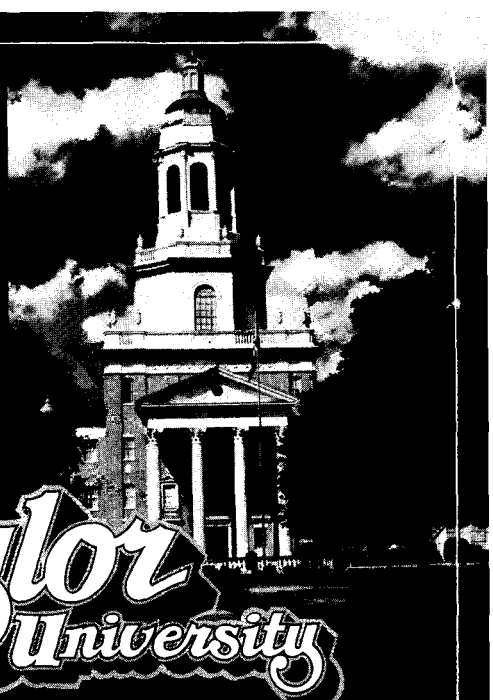
Among many special programs are Early Admission, Scholars and Honors, B.A.-M.A., continuing adult education, J.D.-M.A., summer study, and seven-year B.A.-M.D.

For information, please write to: Dean Justin L. Dunn, Director of Admissions, Department S, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, New York.

Brooklyn College is an affirmative action, equal opportunity institution.

EXCELLENCE—
A TRADITION,
A PRACTICE,
A PROMISE

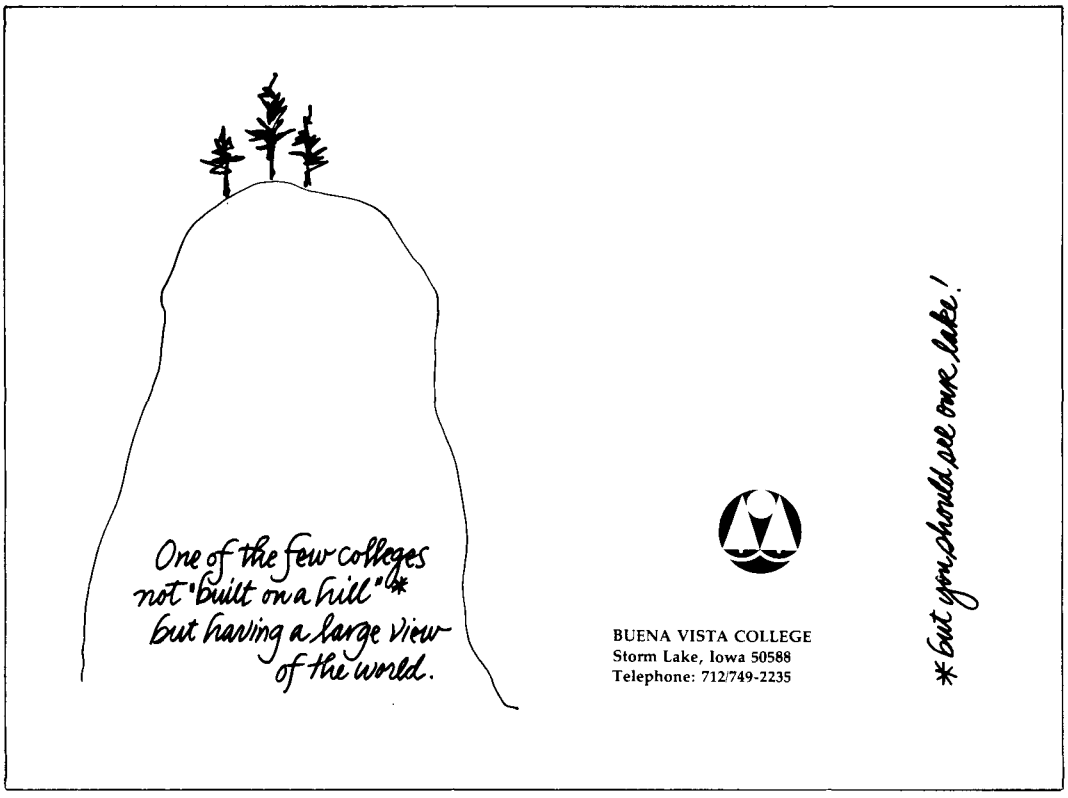
- Chartered in 1845, Texas' oldest institution of higher learning in continuous existence.
- Enrollment of 9,500. Student-faculty ratio of 20 to 1.
- College of Arts and Sciences and Schools of Business, Education, Law, Music, Nursing and Graduate.
- Affiliated units, Baylor Medical Center in Dallas and the U.S. Army Academy of Health Sciences in San Antonio.
- Serving students from every state and many foreign countries.



Baylor University
WACO, TEXAS

For More Information Contact:
Office of Public Affairs • Baylor University
Waco, TX 76703 • 817-755-1961

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Binding college to community through liberal and professional studies.

For undergraduate women:
over 25 fields of study.

For men and women:
a baccalaureate program in nursing, adult education leading to a baccalaureate degree, and graduate studies.

College of New Rochelle

School of Arts and Sciences, Graduate School,
School of New Resources, School of Nursing
New Rochelle, New York 10801 (914) 632-5300

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If you're a thinker

join the crowd.

The immortal works of man have meaning for now and the future. Studying them, you can climb the shoulders of history's giants, understand the past and see what lies ahead.

At Catholic University in the nation's capital you will study with faculty who are leading thinkers in their fields and with students from every state and many foreign countries.

Degrees are offered in the liberal arts and sciences, engineering, architecture, nursing, social work, education, music, religious studies, and philosophy. Ask our representative about the archdiocesan scholarship.

Or inquire at the Admissions Office

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Washington, D.C. 20064

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COLLEGE
OF THE
SISKIYOUS
Weed, California

- Fully accredited
- 2 year transfer program
- Vocational education programs
- Situated in a year round recreation area at the foot of Mt. Shasta
- Dorm facilities on campus

For additional information contact Jerry Edwards—COS—800 College Ave.—Weed, CA 96094—Phone (916) 938-4463

The College of
WOOSTER

An independent collegial community, concerned for standards, a place dedicated to the mind and to the spirit.

Upperclass Independent Study program since 1946

B.A., B.M., and B. Mus.Ed. degrees

Extensive internship and off-campus work/study programs

Kappa of Ohio Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa

Information: Admissions Office Rm.A., The College of Wooster, Wooster, OH 44691

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Broadened perspectives for a shrinking world

From 1519 to 1522, Ferdinand Magellan's expedition circled the world in 37 months; in the 1800s, the fictional Phineas T. Phogg did it in 80 days; in 1962, astronaut John Glenn took 90 minutes. The world is shrinking.

To adapt to this shrinking world, we must begin to understand people from other cultures with whom we will have everyday contact. Virtually every field—foreign service, business, education, law, medicine—requires its future leaders to have this understanding.

Knowing thy neighbor—the goal of Eisenhower's unique World Studies curriculum—is not a luxury, it's a necessity.

EISENHOWER COLLEGE

The small college with the global perspective

Director of Admissions
Eisenhower College
Seneca Falls, N.Y. 13148

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EARLHAM IS . . .

. . . a small liberal arts college with a tradition of academic excellence.

. . . committed to Quaker values of equality, peace, simplicity and community.

. . . a flexible, open, friendly place.
. . . an institution with a nationally known library, excellent teachers and Delta Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.

Contact:
Dean of Admissions
Box 2 Earlham College
Richmond, IN 47374

You Are Invited to Consider
EDGEWOOD COLLEGE
Madison, Wisconsin

A dynamic, fully accredited, four-year liberal arts college offering AA, BA and BS degrees and training in 14 major and 18 minor study fields. Co-educational. V.A. Approved.

Programs in "Special Education" and in "Human Issues"

Write or Call
Director of Admissions
EDGEWOOD COLLEGE
855 Woodrow Street
Madison, Wis. 53711

JERSEY CITY STATE COLLEGE
Jersey City, New Jersey

A four year co-educational, fully accredited, multipurpose institution offering 23 Bachelor of Arts and 19 Master of Arts degree programs. Laboratory School on campus for Special Education program.

Urban setting and orientation . . . . five miles from New York City.

Write: Director of Admissions
2039 Kennedy Boulevard
Jersey City, New Jersey 07305

SUMMER SESSIONS

HOME

- Over 200 graduate and undergraduate courses
- Government/Business/Sociology internships
- Language courses
- English as a Foreign Language
- Writers Conference
- Washington Laboratory
- High School Programs
- College Preparation
- Sessions:

Pre—May 22—July 16
First—June 12—July 15
Second—July 17—August 18
Cross—June 12/26—August 4

ABROAD

- Quito, Ecuador—Spanish
- Dijon, France—French
- Trier, Germany—German
- Oxford, England—Business Administration

For Brochure & Application, Write or Call:
School for Summer and Continuing Education
Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. 20057
(202) 625-3001

Georgetown University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution in employment and admissions

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FURMAN UNIVERSITY

Gamma of South Carolina

- liberal arts . . . fully accredited
- superior faculty . . . excellent library
- 150 years old . . . on beautiful new campus
- six foreign study programs
- undergraduate enrollment limited to 2,000
- church related . . . well-rounded social life

A place where the individual counts.
Greenville, South Carolina 29613

Hobart & William Smith Colleges

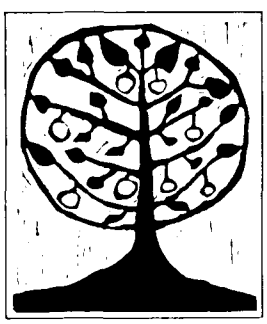
CENTER FOR LANGUAGE STUDY
Latin • French • Spanish
Russian • Italian

June 26-July 14, 1978
Three Weeks
Elementary and Intermediate Study

July 17-August 4, 1978
Three Weeks
Elementary and Intermediate Study

August 7-25, 1978
Three weeks
Intermediate and Readings Study
Students may enroll for one, two, or three sessions.
Tuition—$300 for three weeks, $500 for six weeks, $700 for nine weeks.
Credit—four credit hours for each three-week session. Room and board are available in college dormitories.

For further information and application form, please write:
Center for Language Study
Hobart and William Smith Colleges
Geneva, New York 14456



Goddard College Adult Degree Program

INDEPENDENT STUDY LEADING TO THE B.A. DEGREE

In 1963, Goddard opened the Adult Degree Program, one of the first accredited external degree programs in the nation. The A.D.P. offers a four year course of supervised independent study leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree. Each semester consists of a two-week program on campus and five and one-half months of non-resident study. The Program is restricted to self- motivated adults (minimum age 21). Teacher certification is possible upon completion of the teacher education curriculum. Past successful college work, CLEP general tests and "critical life experience" may grant advanced standing.

Other unusual B.A. and M.A. programs • Approved for payment of Veteran's Benefits

goddard college admits students without regard to sex, race, or ethnic origin

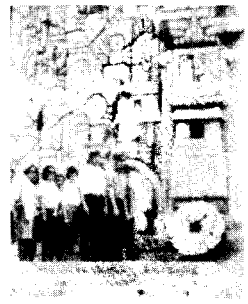
For further information:
Goddard College, ADP, Box E
Plainfield, Vermont 05667
Tel: (802) 454-8311, ext. 391

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HANOVER IS A SMALL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE IN INDIANA .... BUT

A Biology Class meets on the Hanover Campus overlooking the Ohio River

A Sociology-Anthropology Class meets in India



A Spanish Class meets in Mexico

Our Shakespeare Class meets in England

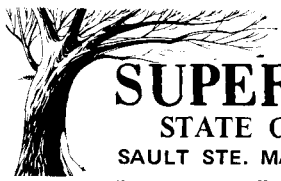
Here's how this curricular program works: After two 14-week terms on campus covering three subjects each, students concentrate on one subject in depth for five weeks, wherever the most appropriate facility is found: a foreign country, a distant state, our nation's capital or the Hanover campus.

But we also pay close attention to the traditional side of education. We devote special time and effort to attracting and holding an able faculty. Two-thirds of our staff hold Ph.D.'s. With a ratio of 1 instructor to 13 students, we have an unusually close relationship. Our President gets to know most students by name, and they all know him.

We've been at Hanover, Indiana since 1827 and we've arrived in 1978 thanks to the generosity of loyal donors and devoted alumni who care about the future of the small Liberal Arts college which awards financial assistance to 60% of its students without federal assistance.

For further information, please call or write the Director of Admissions, or stop in and visit our campus when you are in our neighborhood.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

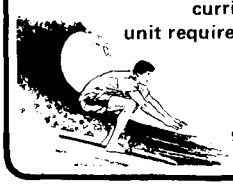


LAKE
SUPERIOR
STATE COLLEGE
SAULT STE. MARIE, MICH.

A small college in a small town in the great green woods at the far north end of I-75.

CAMPUS 112 acres, 22 buildings; Michigan's Upper Peninsula, an unspoiled, wooded, naturally beautiful area with many small lakes and rivers near Lake Superior. Fishing, hunting, swimming, skiing, fresh air and pure water. Estb. 1946 • Enrollment 1266 men, 958 women • Tuition yr.: res. $684, non-res. $1404. Room and board $1550, yr. Annual basic costs: res. $3010, non-res. $3734 • Dormitories and student apartments • Faculty-student 19/1.

ADMISSION: H.S. grads or G.E.D. equivalency with "C" average or higher. ACT scores req. before registration. Science and math, oriented curricula have specific entrance unit requirements. Scholarships, $100 to $1404 per yr.



WRITE for catalog:
College Relations Office,
Dept. A-S, LSSC,
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Lawrence University

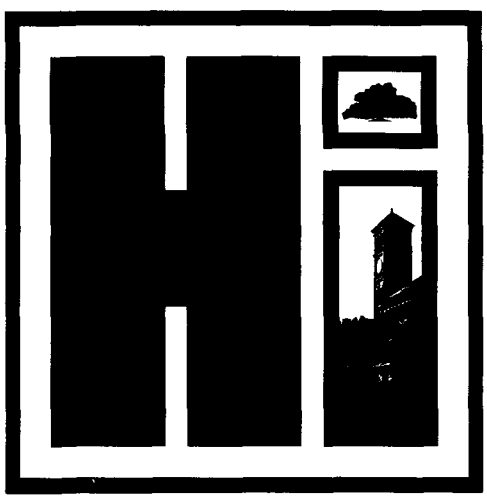
Summer Session 1978
June 19-30

A college experience for qualified high school students in

- Art
- Biology
- French
- Music
- Psychology
- Writing

For information about the program, courses, cost and financial aid, write to:

Jacquelyn B. King
Summer Session Director
Lawrence University
Appleton, Wisconsin 54911



Start making your mark in life.

Providing an education for life in a setting by the sea

Dean of Admissions
HAMPTON INSTITUTE
Hampton, VA 23668 (804) 727-5328

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LIVINGSTONE COLLEGE
Founded 1879

- Fully Accredited. Co-Educational. Church Related
- Arts and Sciences. Pre-Professional Courses. Teacher Training. Social Welfare
- Music. Secretarial *Vocations. Balanced* Co-Curricular Program

"A SCHOOL WHERE NO ONE GETS LOST"

For Information Write:

Registrar: LIVINGSTONE COLLEGE
Salisbury, North Carolina 28144

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY

Marquette University's dedication to academic excellence and community service provides its students with scholarly challenges. Marquette, a Jesuit, independent, urban university, offers masters' degrees in 24 departments, doctoral degrees in 9, and outstanding law and dental educations.

Scholarships and graduate assistantships are available. Address inquiries to Marquette University, either Office of Admissions or the Graduate School, Milwaukee Wisconsin 53233.

Chicago is our classroom

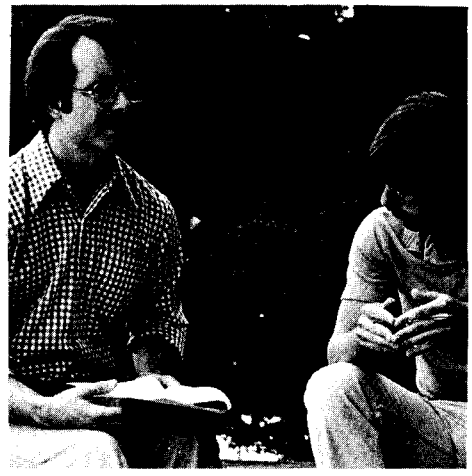
Three campuses in metropolitan Chicago offer prospective students a choice of

35 bachelor's degrees,
28 master's degrees,
the Ph.D. in 17 areas,
and degrees from
7 professional schools.

Loyola University of Chicago — our name affirms a great university's commitment to a great city.

Loyola University of Chicago
820 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611

An equal opportunity educator and employer.



Linfield College

People living in
an environment
of learning
caring, helping,
growing.

McMinnville, Oregon 97128

Marlboro, Vermont

FOUNDED 1946
ACCREDITED

Openings for freshmen and transfers, Sept. 1978, Jan. and Feb. 1979. Special opportunities for intensive study and close working relationships with faculty exist in:

ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY

CHAMBER MUSIC (flute, piano, viola, violin, voice and choral groups); **CREATIVE WRITING; HISTORY and LITERATURE; LANGUAGES** (Classics, French, German, Italian or Spanish); **PHILOSOPHY and RELIGION; PSYCHOLOGY; SCIENCE** (astronomy, biology/ecology, chemistry, mathematics, physics); **THEATRE; PAINTING and DRAWING; SCULPTURE.**

Liberal Arts 4-Year Co-Educational
210 Students 35 Faculty

Town Meeting Community Government

Write: Office of Admissions, Box 11A,
Marlboro College, Marlboro, Vt. 05344

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MONTANA TECH

renowned for quality education
in minerals engineering

ANNOUNCES A NEW DEGREE PROGRAM

in Society & Technology
with concentrations in

Technical & Professional Communications
Technology & Public Policy
Human Values and Technology

Admissions Office
Montana Tech
Butte MT 59701

St. Olaf College
Northfield, Minnesota
Fully accredited liberal arts college
4-1-4 calendar
Excellent library facilities

Paracollege features independent study-tutorial system.

Term Abroad and Interim opportunities in 13 countries with emphasis on Asia.

Minnesota Delta Chapter, Phi Beta Kappa
Sidney A. Rand, *President*

PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

Fully accrediated degree granting institution, 5-year education program with Master's degree. College of Arts and Sciences. . . . Schools of Business Administration, Education, Fine Arts, Nursing and Physical Education. Eight week summer session. Graduate Division offering master's in bus. admin., natural sciences, humanities, social sciences, education, and music.

For information, write:

Director of Admissions, PLU
Tacoma, Washington 98447

SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

Birmingham, Alabama
Founded 1841

A fully accredited, co-educational university with strong liberal arts program. Samford, an agency of the Alabama Baptist State Convention, is comprised of Howard College of Arts and Sciences, the Cumberland School of Law, School of Graduate Studies, professional schools of Business, Education, Music and Pharmacy, and the Ida V. Moffett School of Nursing.

QUALITY EDUCATION

on

A new campus of Colonial-Georgian architecture located on a picturesque, 400-acre mountainous site. Excellent faculty, wide range of courses.

Leslie S. Wright, President

A value-affirming university in the future-finding Southwest

TCU

TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
Fort Worth 76129

Recent issues of the TCU Press:
Three More Plays by André Obey (translated from the French)
The Correspondence of Harold Frederic, Vol. 1 in the Harold Frederic Edition (An approved text of the Center for Editions of American Authors)
Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning by Paul Ricoeur

TCU does not discriminate on the basis of sex, religion, handicap, race or ethnic origin.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DO YOU KNOW?

Those who know us can tell you—
Trinity has an outstanding faculty; 70 per cent of them hold doctoral degrees. And there is one faculty member for every fourteen students.

The University campus is a beautiful educational environment with fine facilities and equipment.

Trinity is a university of excellence you should get to know. Contact the Director of Admissions, 715 Stadium Drive, San Antonio, Tx. 78284 (Tele. 512-736-7207).

TRINITY UNIVERSITY
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

TROY STATE UNIVERSITY

TROY, ALABAMA

FOUNDED 1887

IS CONTINUING ITS EMPHASIS ON FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AND ESPECIALLY WELCOMES INQUIRIES FROM MEMBERS OF PHI BETA KAPPA

RALPH W. ADAMS
President

UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL

French Summer School

July 1 to August 11, 1978

Language (spoken and written)—Literature—Civilization—Methodology— Didactics.
Levels: Elementary, intermediate and advanced.
Methods: Audio-visual, Audio-oral, and other relevant teaching aids.
Language laboratories.
Social activities organized.
Accommodation: Halls of residence on the campus or French-speaking families.
Application for admission must be made prior to June 1, 1978, and it is restricted to persons 18 years or older by June 30, 1978.

For details and application write to:

Programme spécial de français pour non-francophones
Pavillon De Koninck (bureau 1239)
Université Laval
Québec, Canada G1K 7P4

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TUFTS UNIVERSITY

MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

Summer Session

June 26-August 4

For Bulletin write:
DIRECTOR OF SUMMER SCHOOL
Tufts University, Dept. S
Medford, Mass. 02155

USA

On the Gulf of Mexico, the University of South Alabama is fully accredited and provides the learning of a modern technological society, tempered by the wisdom of the classics.

Write:

University of South Alabama
307 University Boulevard
Mobile, Alabama 36688

A tradition of academic excellence . . . pioneering research . . . innovative programs . . .

THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Advanced, first-professional, and undergraduate degrees . . . 16 schools . . . 4 major and 10 special centers . . . 4 regional campuses. The University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260.

A 3-in-1 University for you!

Whether you're a high school senior looking for a fine liberal arts college or a middle-aged working person trying to expand your educational horizons, the University of Redlands probably has a program tailormade to fit your needs.

1. The College of Arts and Sciences

Say you're a high school senior and you're interested in a well-established, residential liberal arts program leading to a bachelor's degree with a traditional major in science, the arts, humanities, music, business, pre-law, pre-med and many more. If you fit that picture, the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Redlands is just the school for you.

2. Johnston College

Maybe you're a high school senior, or an Associate of Arts, or an adult with a yen for "learning" rather than "being taught," for sharing the responsibilities of curriculum and governance. Interested in joining a multi-age student population whose elite faculty help you in designing your personal graduation plan? If so, Johnston College at the University of Redlands is where you belong.

3. Alfred North Whitehead College

Or, perhaps you already have two years of college and have gained occupational/professional experience worthy of evaluation for academic recognition. Now you may wish to finish a degree, but you can't give up your job. If that's your situation, Alfred North Whitehead College of Liberal and Career Studies at the University of Redlands is the place for you.

For more information about programs, contact the Office of Admissions

University of Redlands

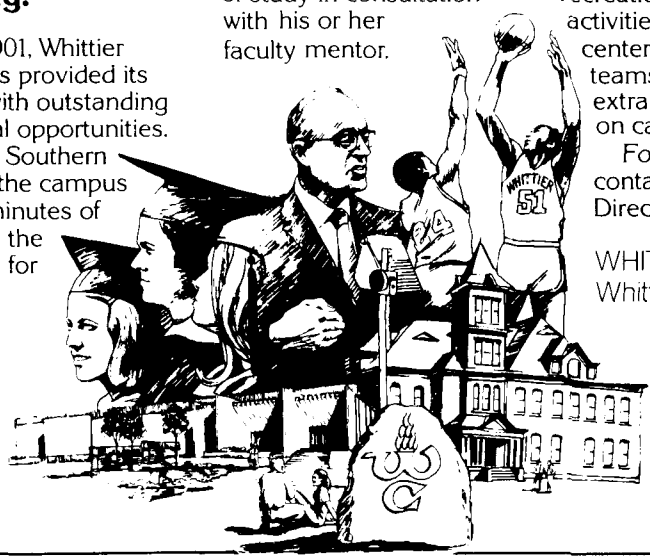
1200 East Colton Avenue, Redlands, CA 92373 • Phone (714) 793-2121

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Whittier College Offers...Scholastic Excellence, an Innovative Schedule and Personalized Learning.

Since 1901, Whittier College has provided its students with outstanding educational opportunities. Located in Southern California, the campus is within minutes of the beach, the mountains for winter fun and the cultural and historic centers that enhance California living.

At Whittier each student is afforded the advantage of designing his or her course of study in consultation with his or her faculty mentor.



Small classes with highly qualified faculty insure the student a challenging individual learning experience.

The new sports and recreation center, student activities, the living learning center and fine athletic teams offer a balanced extracurricular life on campus.

For further information contact: Michael Adams, Director of Admissions.

WHITTIER COLLEGE,
Whittier, California 90608

If you are searching for an unusual quality education, offered in a human laboratory, at an affordable cost, write to:

The Director of Admissions
Virginia Union University
1500 North Lombardy Street
Richmond, Virginia 23220
(804) 359-9331

A college for American scholars since 1865.

VIRGINIA WESLEYAN COLLEGE

An Exciting Academic Village Concept

Coeducational
Fully Accredited
Four-year Liberal Arts Curriculum
Emphasis on Individual Student
Beautifully wooded, 300-acre campus

For Further information, write:

Admission Office
Virginia Wesleyan College
Norfolk, Virginia 23502

STUDY ABROAD WITH SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

SEMESTER PROGRAMS: ■ FLORENCE ■ MADRID ■ STRASBOURG ■ AMSTERDAM ■ LONDON ■ MEXICO

•Variety of courses offered • No language background required • Financial Aid available • Summer program available in England, Italy, Israel, Switzerland, Austria, East Africa

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE ____ ZIP ____
PROGRAM OF INTEREST _____

For more information and application return to Division of International Programs Abroad 335 Comstock Avenue Syracuse, New York 13210

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"people-centered education"

GEORGE WILLIAMS COLLEGE

Accredited by North Central Association and Council on Social Work Education

Bachelor's in:	Master's in:
Applied Behav. Science	Administration
Biology (Physiology (Ecology	Counseling Psychology
General Studies	Leisure and Environmental Resources Admin.
Health Education	Health Education
Humanities	Physical Education
Natural Sciences	Social Work
Physical Education	
Social Sciences	
Recreation Services	

in the Chicago Metropolitan Area
555 31st St., Downers Grove, Ill.
(312) 964-3113 or 3114

sected and condemned contemporary society and linked male dominance, power struggles, patriotism, and the class structure of capitalism with fascism and war in a decidedly more radical perspective. Its concern for women's education is fresh and contemporary, its discussions of sex roles, sex stereotyping, and masculine bias have now become subjects of current research: those tangled questions of sex-linked intellectual traits, gender, sexual psychology now explored by social psychologists, sociologists, psychologists, and other thoughtful observers. *Three Guineas* also examines the social context of professional life, the access to privileges and resources, funds, advancement, and information, and it delineates the kind of structural inequities that all minorities, not only feminists, have found so much more resistant than mere political disenfranchisement.

The war that those "three guineas" were solicited to help prevent was not prevented, however, and the world of these past thirty-five years since Virginia Woolf's death has been a very different world in both outlines and ideology. What Virginia Woolf envisaged in the thirties merely as remote possibilities have become, in the seventies, actualities. In the last ten years, in fact, the entrance of women into the professions, industry, and public life has been an extraordinary development, and it has been accompanied by a universalizing of the historic egalitarian principles in a manner without precedent. Obviously so changed a social and intellectual environment affects the way Virginia Woolf is read today, and by whom. Even the academic setting from which so many of the new Woolf scholars come has not remained impervious to recent changes, and indeed for part of the time it was one of the theaters where the drama was played out more energetically; where transformations could be abrupt, unwelcome, even feared; and where financial retrenchment eroded some of those changes even before they were assimilated. As for feminism, it no longer means the lone heroic figure—Christine de Pisan, Mary Wollstonecraft—or the women's clubs of revolutionary Paris, or the suffragettes; it is no longer the feminism Virginia Woolf knew. More is involved than sentiment or symbolism. Feminist ideology at present is only the most visible or audible aspect of a whole structure of accomplishments, organizations, services, publications, caucuses, archives, projects, attitudes, allocations, disciplines; of research, legal power, economic force, political activity. The Victorian daughter, the Angel in the House, the Edwardian son cursing cads and blackguards—all would be amazed today, but so would liberated Bloomsbury, and perhaps so would Virginia Woolf herself.

Would she be pleased with the fortunes of her literary reputation? Would she have welcomed the founding of "her" society? The triumph over Arnold Bennett would surely have amused her, but she might not have been entirely pleased at the society, the *Miscellany*, and all the other proliferations of regard that inevitably accompany such literary discoveries or revivals. She had often expressed a distaste for groups, for public organized articulations, despite Leonard Woolf's involvement in the Labour party and socialist journalism and her own political involvement. There was only one society she adhered to, a Society of Outsiders. As a woman of privileged circumstances, largely exempt from the deprivations and indignities of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

women's historic experience, she lived in a kind of easy bohemian comfort, never lacking servants or much else. On the other hand, she refused all prizes, honors, honorary doctorates, and other distinctions, and even rejected the chance to give the highly honorific Clark Lectures at Cambridge, which Leslie Stephen had once given. She could easily have accumulated such triumphs for herself alone, but an important part of her new renown rests on her refusal to do so. It was not merely a personal inclination but the consequence of an intellectual position. *A Room of One's Own* had winningly proposed freedom and £500 for gifted women, for great minds, for androgynous ones, for writers, but not for everyone. As her thinking on this matter changed, however, she became more concerned with the deprivation of women as a class and with the radical questions about society that deprivation implied. In this respect, too, she is very contemporary, but there were certain implications she never worked out, contradictions she did not live to see resolved or even broached. For her, Antigone remained the figure of integrity, and history is generous in supplying Creons. Contemporary assessments of Virginia Woolf link her with Antigone in a noble procession of heroines, but she herself in some sense needed to get beyond Antigone—the sense of community and history in *Between the Acts* hints at this—but this was not to be. Only the individual, the *exemplary* heroism finally appealed to her.

Stooping to Conquer

ROBERT FROST: THE WORK OF KNOWING. *By Richard Poirier. Oxford University Press. $11.95.*

Reviewed by KENNETH S. LYNN

Richard Poirier's first book, *The Comic Sense of Henry James*, struck me in 1960 as a model of what the New Criticism could accomplish. Its meticulous explications and subtle wit almost justified the absurd contention that literature could effectively be studied apart from life. In any case, I admired Poirier for sticking to his literary beliefs, even if I could not share them. But when the wave of undergraduate enthusiasm for the New Criticism suddenly crashed a few years later, leaving thousands of English teachers half-drowning in the foam, I noticed that Poirier managed to escape the debacle without even getting his hair wet. For by that time he had added another sort of performance to his act: Richard Poirier, the close reader of literary classics, had also become Richard Poirier, the authority on popular culture.

The essays that now flowed from his typewriter displayed an almost slavish anxiety to please. When the Beatles were big on the campuses, Poirier praised the group in terms that had previously been reserved for the greatest figures in musical history. When students mistook Norman Mailer's journalism for art, Poirier hailed the burnt-out novelist as one of the "modern masters" of literature. No one working in cultural criticism in the 1960s and early 1970s was more dominated by the vagaries of fashion than "Trendy Dick."

Thus the news that Poirier had published a book on Robert Frost surprised and pleased me. Perhaps this meant that he was returning to a full-time devotion to his true métier. And in choosing to write on a poet whose reputation has slipped badly in recent years, he had obviously decided to buck the winds of critical doctrine. At long last, I told myself, Poirier has outgrown his nickname.

God forgive me for premature conclusions! The Frost that Poirier has given us is a poet so perfectly in tune with "recent critical theory" that if he were alive today he would undoubtedly be teaching on permanent appointment in the English department at Yale. The hot gospel according to New Haven asserts that a poem cannot be about anything but itself, and that the worth of a critic can be measured by his ability to exhibit the linguistic and epistemological profundity of that assertion. It is precisely on these grounds that Poirier makes the case for Frost's importance and for his own: "Frost seems to me of vital interest and consequence because his ultimate subject is the interpretive process itself."

The trouble with excitingly chic generalizations is that you are stuck with them when you get down to specifics. Richard Poirier is a

KENNETH S. LYNN, professor of history at the Johns Hopkins University, is the author of *Mark Twain and Southwestern Humor.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gifted explicator of texts; yet in *Robert Frost: The Work of Knowing* he repeatedly makes himself look foolish as he strains to demonstrate the modish complexity of the poems. Take, for instance, the analysis of "Spring Pools." Poirier begins by slightly misquoting the poem ("blot up" rather than "blot out," and, even worse, a period rather than a comma at the end of line four, which turns lines five and six into a nonsentence). Here, however, is the correct text:

These pools that, though in forests, still reflect
The total sky almost without defect,
And like the flowers beside them, chill and shiver,
Will like the flowers beside them soon be gone,
And yet not out by any brook or river,
But up by roots to bring dark foliage on.

The trees that have it in their pent-up buds
To darken nature and be summer woods—
Let them think twice before they use their powers
To blot out and drink up and sweep away
These flowery waters and these watery flowers
From snow that melted only yesterday.

"This is a rather hazardous poem," says Poirier, "and raises in an acute way a central and evaded problem about how properly to read Frost."

Quite simply, there is a question here, and to some degree in all his work, of his willingness *not* to be ironic, his willingness not to slough off responsibility by ascribing his own confusions of feeling to a "speaker" other than himself or to merely some aspect of himself that has been entrapped, as it were, in a ludicrous situation. The ludicrousness, in turn, is ignored by critics who habitually talk about "situations" as if they were all "dramatic." "Dramatic situation" and "speaker" are terms which I shall have to use now and then, but never, I hope, in order to exempt Frost from the perplexities, absurdities, and contradictions that belong to some of his poems. His greatness depends, I think, in large part on his actually seeking out opportunities for being in untenable positions. In poem after poem he defies the nature of things, lets his metaphors take him too far, and all the while appeals to a kind of decorum by which his excess becomes admirably an evidence of his dependence upon us to go along with him. . . . Of the many Frostean characteristics illustrated by this poem none is so important as the way the voice can be said to be victimized by its own energies. It is betrayed by grammer [*sic*] as much as by the logical implications of the metaphors on which it insists. Thus, both pools and flowers are said to "chill and shiver." This yoking of a transitive and a normally intransitive verb is a grammatical indication of the forced effort to make things identical when they are only to some extent similar. "Flowers" may "shiver" and so may "pools," but only the latter have the power to "chill."

The linchpin that holds this argument together is the grammatical example offered at the end of the quotation. Frost has yoked the transitive verb "chill" with the intransitive verb "shiver." Alas. Poirier's mastery of English grammar is a trifle shaky. "Chill" is not just a transitive verb; it is also an intransitive verb. In its intransitive form it means, according to *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, "to become cold." In the raw wind of a New England spring day, the pools and flowers grow cold; the mirrorlike surfaces of the pools become ruffled; the heads of the flowers toss and bend; that is, the pools and flowers "chill and shiver." With the removal of the linchpin, a large part of Poirier's analysis automatically collapses, and what remains standing is misleading.

If "Spring Pools" is not the word game that Poirier makes it into, then what is it? Despite the mock-serious warning to the trees to "think twice" before they drink up all the water and destroy the flowers, "Spring Pools" is a poem that gazes into an abyss of unrelieved desperation. For the warning to the trees is akin to the desolate humor of the later Mark Twain, and only serves to intensify the scariness of Frost's quietly deadly thoughts. Far from being the linguistically difficult and emotionally contradictory poem that Poirier displays, "Spring Pools" is a simple but very powerful exhibition of Frost's obsessive fear of dying.

What was the origin of his obsession? I obviously cannot answer that question with authority, but my hunch is that it proceeded out of his tormented knowledge of the damage he had done to other people. Professor Poirier will not agree with me, I am sure, for he does not care for Lawrance Thompson's account of Frost's ruthlessness and cunning in his massive biography of the poet. In Poirier's opinion, Thompson's portrait is "harsh, distorted, and personally resentful," and throughout *Robert Frost: The Work of Knowing* Poirier conveys to us his own sense of the poet as a wonderful man, for all his

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

human faults. If the light he throws on Frost's personality manages to illuminate a good many of his shortcomings, it still leaves in darkness the man whom Perry Miller once described as "demonic."

In discussing the poems, Poirier is also much given to gushy adjectives that aim at reducing their strength. For example, in discussing the undercurrent of sexuality in "The Need of Being Versed in Country Things," Poirier says that "the proffered interpretation is compelling enough to mask other possibilities which would greatly enrich it, like the lovely Shakespearean pun in the phrase 'country things.'" I myself would think that such a pun might more appropriately be described as bawdy. Yet if Poirier's adjectives often leave something to be desired, he at least does not commit the worse error of writing in the strong but virtually impenetrable language of a Harold Bloom or a Geoffrey Hartman—albeit these are the critics he is currently seeking to impress. In the continuing clarity of Poirier's prose I detect the faint possibility that some day he will clamber down from whatever critical bandwagon he may be riding on and strike out on his own.

Where There's a Way, There's a Will

LYING, DESPAIR, JEALOUSY, ENVY, SEX, SUICIDE, DRUGS, AND THE GOOD LIFE. *By Leslie H. Farber. Basic Books. $10.*

Reviewed by PETER GAY

I want to say it at once: this is a self-indulgent, even a lazy book. All thirteen chapters have appeared before and are now reprinted, apparently quite unrevised, untouched. In fact, six of them were published only a dozen years ago, in 1966, in Leslie Farber's earlier collection, *The Ways of the Will.* Readers of *Commentary* or *Harper's* will therefore find old acquaintances here, if not old friends. But what particularly fortifies the reader's uncanny sense of *déjà lu* is the author's (and his publisher's) willingness to let the same idea reappear in more than one essay—sometimes, and disconcertingly, in

PETER GAY is Durfee Professor of History at Yale University. His newest book is *Freud, Jews and Other Germans: Masters and Victims in Modernist Culture.*

GARFIELD

A Biography by Allan Peskin

A major biography of our twentieth president, revealing a much more complex figure than popular history has handed down. Ohio canal boy, minister, Civil War general, college president, lawyer, Republican Party leader, president—he lived in exciting times and was a major force in the hurly-burly of Gilded Age politics as America entered the era of industrialization and high finance. He was also a man so wracked by self-doubt that he never actively sought an office—but never lost an election; and his fate was to have the memory of his career overshadowed by the manner of his death at the hands of a mad assassin. *$20.00*

The Kent State University Press
Kent, Ohio 44242

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the same words. Verbal autoerotism can hardly go further than this. Farber has some amusing, and some penetrating, things to say about the sex life of our time—his imaginary dialogue between a couple after intercourse, in "I'm Sorry Dear," is apt and poignant—and about the problematic nature of the psychoanalytic process. He is, in fact, most interesting when he is being candidly autobiographical about his professional training, as in "Lying on the Couch." Farber is blessed with a sardonic distance from his own profession, and says things better than most of his colleagues. One only wishes he would not say them over and over again.

Such self-reference could be justified—if it can be justified at all—if the author had something of desperate urgency to say. But this I doubt. Farber is at his best with the vignette, the small if telling moment. His confessions to exhilarating, and wholly inauthentic, revelations on the couch and his report on confronting his supervisor during his training are engaging. More than that, they bring into sharp focus the obstacles to honesty, even in the psychoanalytic situation, and the almost infinite capacity for deception, of self and others, with which articulate, well-educated human beings seem to be endowed. Recounting his own lies, Farber reminds us of ours. And his essays gain in pointedness by reflecting his choice of the concrete. Commenting on Tolstoy's notion that "man desires the body" of woman in his erotic life, Farber agrees, but then adds—and the pressure for the specific makes it a true addition—that "our habit with abstractions of this order may make us forget that it is not exactly the body *qua* body that man desires but rather the body with its coverings and uncoverings." But beyond this, and similar nuggets of cultural and psychological observation, we have Farber's theory of the will—a category which, he says with his repetitive emphasis, has been badly neglected in psychoanalytic literature, beginning with Freud himself.

For Farber, where there is a way, there was the will. Will is the great mover, the agent that translates intention into action. Those other categories that psychologists have used—"unconscious, aggression, dependence, power, inferiority, sadomasochism, and, of course, anxiety"—have, "in various psychologies," been "made to do the work of the will," to their loss. Will looks like motive, but is far more important. "If I disparage my friend's achievements out of envy, envy is the motive of my disparagement. However, envy is not the same as will, even though my will to disparage may be incited by my motive of envy." To be sure, Farber admits, "psychic determinism" has a place in the psychology of will he is proposing, but he would reduce it to its proper—that is to say, an inferior—sphere. "If, out of envy, I will to disparage, I still have the option of willing not to disparage." This may be, as Farber puts it, "a polemic" for the "particular prime mover" of his system, but he insists on its validity and its centrality.

I confess that Farber's energetic rehabilitation of the will seems pointless to me. Freud once, in an interesting aside, described Schopenhauer's "unconscious will" as equivalent to his own notion of instinctual drives. The psychoanalytic theory of instincts is in a notoriously unsettled condition, but Farber's "will" is, if anything, even murkier. When unconscious, it does the work of Freud's instincts, or of their potent, ubiquitous embodiment, the wish. When preconscious or conscious—a dimly or plainly felt desire toward realization—it threatens to be merely superficial, perhaps helpful for the description of a mental state but scarcely for its explication. Moreover, Farber's example of someone willing, and at the same time not willing, to disparage someone else is nothing more than a typical instance of what Freud and his followers have called a conflict. Nothing, it seems to me, has been gained for psychology by Farber's rescue and reformulation of volition. In fact, much has been lost. Take Farber's analysis of hysteria in his essay "Will and Willfulness in Hysteria." His thesis is that "hysteria is a particular disorder of will whose principal expression is willfulness." (By "willfulness," Farber means a distortion, an obstinate perversion of desire.) "In willfulness, the life of the will becomes distended, overweening, and obtrusive at the same time that its movements become increasingly separate, sovereign, and distinct from other aspects of spirit." In the hysteric's willfulness, "will pursues its own tyrannical course with reckless disdain for what we usu-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ally mean by content, unless the content be will itself." This tells us nothing about the origins of hysteria—its causes and occasions—and thus fails to establish its diagnostic and prognostic utility. It is "literary" description: picturesque, evocative, and vague. What I have called Farber's pressure for the specific, which he employs to such good purpose when he observes the foibles of modern Americans at family reunions, or in bed together, is dissipated when he is engaged in polemicizing for his system.

What has happened? It would be malicious to call it willfulness or to disparage Farber's evident gifts. There are some clues scattered through this book that may help to explain—I am being deliberately tentative—this triumph of intelligence about the surfaces, and its lapse at the core, of the human psyche. For, all his professions to the contrary, Farber is in rebellion against Freud's psychic determinism. The will, which must enter its verdict before motive turns into action, is for Farber a precious element of human freedom, a declaration of independence from what he sees as the "professional tic" of psychotherapists: "the compulsion or will toward causality." And behind that general term "psychotherapists" stands Farber's looming adversary, Sigmund Freud. I infer this from two passages in Farber's book, both of them rather astounding misreadings of Freud. "Because the willful, and aesthetic, nature of hysteria has not been understood," Farber writes in his essay on that malady, "many psychologists, including Freud, have mistakenly believed hysteria to be an almost exclusively female disorder." In fact, in the spring of 1885 Freud brought back from Paris, from his decisive studies with Charcot, the news that hysteria, then considered an exclusively female complaint, could also be found in men. In his later work, especially that touching on homosexuality, Freud declared hysteria to be, though somewhat rarer than in women, a common psychological ailment in men.

Perhaps even more revealing is Farber's comment on Freud's lament over the failure of his patient Dora to complete her analysis—a lament of which Farber speaks twice in this short book. The passage in Freud's case history of Dora, too long to quote here in full,

EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE

Social Order and Land Use in America

CONSTANCE PERIN

"Zoning regulations, land use, and living space may seem the very essence of the factual, but they are moral and ethical issues. Constance Perin's excellent book focuses on the things Americans know, but will not tell even themselves, about the spatial design of their lives. It poses the challenge of a truly original anthropology of American values."—*Roy Wagner, University of Virginia* $12.95

Princeton University Press

Princeton, New Jersey 08540

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shows Freud speculating on what might have happened if he had "acted a part," exaggerating "the importance to me of her staying on" and showing "a warm personal interest in her," thus providing her with a "substitute for the affection she longed for." Freud wonders, and concludes, as he often did, "I do not know."

The passage is justly famous. In it Freud portrays himself, with an unusual heightening of intensity, as the conjurer who raises "the most evil of those half-tamed demons that inhabit the human breast, and seeks to wrestle with them." And he notes, with stoic resignation, that no one who acts as such a conjurer can expect to escape unscathed. His resignation is more than rhetorical; it is clinically informative. He does not know why Dora failed to come back after a particularly productive session and whether his dissembling might have produced a different outcome; he does not know because the course of Dora's treatment had been too short, and the yield too fragmentary, to permit him to analyze her transferences and her resistances. Besides, Freud adds, with that pride and that pointed irony against metaphysics that were as intimate a part of him as his stoicism, "I have always avoided acting a part, and have contented myself with practicing the humbler arts of psychology." Biographers have differed on the reading of this moment in Freud's career as a therapist. But it takes a special animus to hold, as Farber does, that this is "one of the most anguished statements in the literature of psychology, a *cri de cœur,*" which permits us to discern "the frantic flailings of spirit that would declare to the world the pain this perverse creature had inflicted on Freud and, at the same time, give rational form to his outrage." There is more, and worse, to come. Farber sees in Freud's rumination a "conviction" that barely skirts "the edges of self-pity and self-aggrandizement." It is true that Farber chooses this incident to illustrate Freud's desertion of "will and understanding," which he had granted to Dora, for "libido." But Farber's appraisal remains a remarkable, and to me involuntarily instructive, denigration of Freud's character and intentions.

It cannot be my purpose (nor would it be within my competence) to psychoanalyze Leslie Farber; it is a familiar and unworthy trick to discredit the ideas of others by tracing them to the dung heap of psychological conflicts. Yet these passages point beyond their manifest content. And it is here that this book rises above its particular merits and defects to stand as a general symptom. No one in his right mind would argue that Freud is beyond criticism. Surely—when we think of his revisions in instinct theory, his ideas on female sexuality, and his theory of anxiety—the greatest critic Freud ever faced was Freud himself. And there has been much interesting, and sometimes weighty, work in the testing and revising of Freud's ideas within what we may loosely call the Freudian camp. But psychoanalysts writing after Freud have found themselves in a peculiar position. An acknowledged giant among the scientists of man, Freud towers over them. He stands in an unusual, perhaps a unique, position. Even if we take account of his precursors and teachers—precursors and teachers, by the way, whom Freud scrupulously and conspicuously acknowledged—we must note that Freud invented a whole field of inquiry. He gave it its vocabulary, expanded its range across the entire reach of the human mind, anticipated in his voluminous writings many of the objections to his system, and proposed promising routes for new research. He was not a one-man band, as the saying has it, but a one-man orchestra. What is more, he was a brilliant stylist, in fact a great writer—a quality that has survived into the brave, competent, if not always inspired, standard translation of his writings into English. How is one to equal, or even approach, such a man? Freud (or so it must seem to many psychologists) left his successors little to do: some cleaning up here and there, some isolated forays into yet unexplored terrain that scarcely promises to be very interesting. To acknowledge Freud's genius seems only reasonable, but, beyond the rewards of being praised for reasonableness, what else could an ambitious psychologist hope for? In short, the psychologist's dilemma seems to be posed: to be epigone or eccentric. Plainly, Farber does not will to be an epigone.

I do not believe that the dilemma is as clear-cut, the choice as hopeless, as all that. Freud opened more roads for others than has

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

widely been recognized, and not merely in the large and fascinating domain of psychology itself; in the employment of psychoanalysis in neighboring fields, such as history, there is much room for work and some hope for fame. Farber, I submit, has chosen another way: of correcting what needs no correction, certainly not in his way. It is, thus, only in the margins of his exposition, not in its heart, that *Lying, Despair, Jealousy, Envy, Sex, Suicide, Drugs, and the Good Life* is rewarding. There is no index.

Dr. J

SAMUEL JOHNSON. *By W. Jackson Bate. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. $19.95.*

Reviewed by DONALD GREENE

Some grumbling has lately been heard about the "cult of personality" afflicting the American public. At the supermarket and the drugstore, the faces leer at you from magazine stands. Some belong to people you have never heard of, and never will again; others are only too familiar, perennials like Farrah Fawcett-Majors, Mick Jagger, Jacqueline Onassis. *People* and its rivals keep you *au courant* on their marital and extramarital crises; their problems with alcohol, drugs, money, TV producers, photographers; their agonizing decisions about changing their agents or hairstyles. Their fans seem uninterested in what, if anything, they have contributed to the world in the way of achievement; that clearly has no bearing on whether or not an individual is celebrity material.

Not even the late Elvis Presley and James Dean, however, had longer runs as certified celebrities than has Samuel ("Doctor") Johnson—"1709–1784," to distinguish him from other Samuel Johnsons, some likewise "Doctor," who never made it in the Nielsen ratings. Last year Helen McGuffie published a book listing items about him that appeared in the British press during the last thirty years or so of his life; it is 346 pages long, with ten or

DONALD GREENE is professor of English at the University of Southern California. His latest book is an edition of Samuel Johnson's *Political Writings*.

Looking at Architecture with Ruskin

JOHN UNRAU

Ruskin's sensitivity to the complexity of visual experience, coupled with his power as a draughtsman, makes him one of the most exciting commentators on architecture. This survey of how Ruskin looked at buildings brings to light many passages, previously unknown or ignored, which express some of his most interesting insights. With 101 illustrations, including 64 drawings by Ruskin. $15.00

A Commentary on *The Anathemata* of David Jones

RENÉ HAGUE

The Anathemata has a name for a certain difficulty. The aim of this page by page commentary is to show how patient the work is of simple explanation and how rewarding it can be even to the reader who brings to it no remarkable width of reading or depth of learning. René Hague's close friendship with the poet has both informed and enriched this remarkable book. $16.50

Keynes, Cambridge and the General Theory

Edited by DON PATINKIN and J. CLARK LEITH

Keynes' *General Theory* is famous not only for the revolution which it wrought in macro-economic theory, but also for the legendary process of criticism and discussion which accompanied its development. This creative process was the subject of a recent conference which generated a dialogue between the oral and written history of ideas. The results provide a better understanding of the inner workings of the process, the stages through which it proceeded, and the personalities involved. $20.00

prices are those suggested at time of publication

University of Toronto Press

33 East Tupper Street, Buffalo, NY 14203

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

twelve entries on each page. As with Dean and Presley, as soon as he died there was a traffic jam of memoirs—Tyers, Cooke, Shaw, Strahan, Boswell (the Hebrides tour) in 1785; Towers, Piozzi, Harrison in 1786; Hawkins, 1787; Boswell (*Life*), 1791; Murphy, 1792; Anderson, 1795.

A legend used to be current that "the tremendous reputation of Boswell's *Life*" frightened others away from attempting biographies of Johnson. The phrase is Joseph Wood Krutch's in his *Samuel Johnson*, 1944, not very subtly calling attention to his own hardihood in producing it, and to the pusillanimity of the "specialist," who "knows too much to be willing to undertake anything of the sort." In the mid-nineteenth century there does seem to have been a lull in the production of "large inclusive books which would serve to give the general reader a running account of Johnson's life, character, and work"—also Krutch. It is hard to say whether this was the result of T. B. Macaulay's pronouncement that Eclipse (the Seattle Slew of his day) was first and the rest nowhere—that is, that anyone foolish enough to run against Boswell in the biographical stakes would suffer the fate of a selling-plater—or merely of the earlier saturation of the market. But if any such diffidence existed, it has been diminishing at a rate approximating that of our reserves of fossil fuels.

Modern scholars sometimes complain that Krutch's "general reader" is an extinct species. In the matter of books about Johnson, his demise has been greatly exaggerated. This year is the centenary of Leslie Stephen's *Samuel Johnson*, the first title in the English Men of Letters series, decidedly not intended for the specialist. If the following list of "inclusive" accounts of Johnson for the "general reader" were plotted chronologically, something like an exponential curve would result: Stephen, 1878; James Macaulay, 1884; Francis Grant, 1887; Walter Raleigh, 1907; John Bailey, 1913; S. C. Roberts, 1919; Christopher Hollis, 1929; Hugh Kingsmill, 1933; S. C. Roberts (again), 1935; Krutch, 1944; C. E. Vulliamy, 1946; Charles Norman, 1951; W. J. Bate (*The Achievement of Samuel Johnson*), 1955; Hesketh Pearson, 1958; Matthew Hodgart, 1962; David Littlejohn, 1965; (Donald Greene, 1970, would fit nicely here, but volumes in Twayne's English Authors are well known to be for the scholastic grind, not the general reader); Paul Fussell, 1971; Christopher Hibbert, 1971; Peter Quennell, 1973; John Wain (*Samuel Johnson*), 1975; Margaret Lane, 1975; Wain (*Johnson on Johnson*), 1976. And so—one is tempted to say, inevitably—we come to W. Jackson Bate, 1977.

The list is not homogeneous. Some pieces are extended essays rather than full-fledged books; some are frankly for the coffee table; some are "debunkings"; some, like Littlejohn's and like Wain's second volume, are collections of Johnson's letters, linked by sections of narrative so as to form a continuous story; some, like Fussell's *Johnson: The Life of Writing*, have a special focus. But all, in their various ways, attempt to be "inclusive." All are designed for the "general reader," some perhaps even for the selection committees of general readers' book clubs. British ones in particular have a tendency to appear on the market in time for the Christmas trade.

And they all have one trait in common—they add nothing new to what was already known about Johnson. New interpretations, yes. New emphases, yes (it used to be on "Johnson the great Clubman," whom F. R. Leavis contrasted sardonically with "Johnson the great highbrow," the thinker and writer; recently it has been on "Johnson the great neurotic"). But new information—no. Hence the omission from the list of Aleyn Lyell Reade's eleven volumes of *Johnsonian Gleanings*, published (at his own expense) between 1909 and 1952, and James L. Clifford's *Young Sam Johnson*, 1955, in which the writers, through laborious research in official archives, family papers, parish registers, and so on, added many hitherto unknown facts to our knowledge of Johnson. Clifford has just completed, after twenty-two years, the sequel to *Young Sam;* it covers Johnson's middle years and contains much new information that will have to be included in the next "inclusive" work.

Much of this "general reader" output is worthless—simpleminded *rifacimenti* of Boswell, errors, omissions, bias, and all. Still, there are those in which the writer has conscientiously gone beyond Boswell to the vast

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

amount of recent scholarship that has turned up information about Johnson—information not merely about details of his life, but about his authorship, reading, political and other involvements—unknown to Boswell (or sometimes known to Boswell, but deliberately suppressed by him). For many years I recommended Krutch's book to my students as the best introduction to Johnson. When Wain's biography appeared, I enthusiastically added it to Krutch's. And I shall do the same with Bate's very competent and useful synthesis.

One result of the flood of recent Johnson scholarship is that the books grow bigger and bigger. Stephen's was a modest 195 pages; Bate's runs to a formidable 646. Whereas in his earlier *Achievement of Samuel Johnson*, Bate (no doubt following Macaulay) was able to deal with Johnson's political activity in a sentence—"He never turned much thought to the subject of politics, at least in written form"—in his new book he devotes a substantial chapter to it. And here I confess considerable embarrassment about commenting on Bate's book at all, since he has been more than generous in expressing his debt to my own work. There is really little I can say about it, except to praise it as comprehensive, judicious, readable, and, generally, accurate. Of course, "specialists," having the advantage of working with primary rather than secondary materials, can detect small inaccuracies in almost any such "inclusive" work. A trivial example: the manuscript of Chambers's and Johnson's Oxford lectures on English law is said to be "about sixteen hundred pages." Bate got this figure from E. L. McAdam, the first scholar to study the work. In fact, it runs to over 2,000. I happen to know this because I recently had a photocopy of the manuscript made and am trying to arrange for its editing and printing. One cannot expect an "inclusive" biography to verify at first hand every detail of Johnson's long and varied career (though as I write this, I think uneasily of Joseph Frank's superbly researched first volume of his projected four-volume biography of Dostoevsky), and even "specialists" are fallible. When a Johnsonian friend and I mildly twitted John Wain about some minor slips, he neatly retorted that the

"Harold Bloom has remarked that the best literary critics today are 'negative theologians', and this would in a particularly honourable sense be true of the late Lionel Trilling. . . . **As penetrating as it is elegant and compressed,** Robert Boyers's admirable study contrives to suggest in a short space not only what is important about Trilling, in relation to the contemporary criticism that reflects our contemporary social and ideological climate, but how his status as a political and cultural theologian reveals the shape and probable destiny of cultural attitudes in our time."—*The Times Literary Supplement*

Lionel Trilling: Negative Capability and the Wisdom of Avoidance
by Robert Boyers, 80 pages, $5.50 paper

University of Missouri Press • 107 Swallow Hall, Columbia, Missouri 65201

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

largest amount of critical fan mail he had received concerned an assertion in his book that Robert Walpole was the last commoner to receive the Garter before Winston Churchill. A crowd of indignant British Tories pointed out that he—or rather I, since Wain had taken the statement from a work of mine—had forgotten Sir Austen Chamberlain.

But many of Bate's readers will not worry much about what Johnson thought and wrote about Walpole or English law. Some of the dust-jacket blurbs are by eminent authors whose writings have not hitherto displayed much concern with Johnson's writings—James Gould Cozzens, Archibald MacLeish, Robert Lowell ("The greatness of the book is made by the presence of Dr. Johnson"—one wonders whether the late poet would have relished being regularly addressed as "Dr. Lowell"; like Johnson, he had a number of honorary doctorates, but he omitted all mention of them from his *Who's Who* entry). For them, as for Robert Penn Warren, the book is attractive as "a profound psychological study, a touching human document." Jessamyn West even ecstasizes, "A book that does not tell you *about* Johnson, but causes you *to become* Johnson."

Well, no author can be held responsible for what misguided readers make of his work. Still, one would like to know how Johnson would have reacted to the news that Bate's book caused Miss West to "become" him. I have to admit that, although I read everything written by Johnson that I can discover because it provides unfailing delight and instruction, I have never felt any strong urge to *become* Johnson, or even, if I had the opportunity, to meet him. When Johnson was once asked for an introduction to some currently celebrated author, he answered, "You had better let it alone; the best part of every author is in general to be found in his book, I assure you." Those who have shepherded certain celebrated writers on lecture tours to college campuses will have no difficulty grasping Johnson's point.

Love for reading *about* Johnson, or for "becoming" him, clearly has little correlation with love for reading *Johnson*. Lying beside Bate's book on my desk is the annual appeal from the editorial committee of the Yale edition of Johnson's works for contributions to help finance another volume. As little as $10 will be welcomed. It took twenty years for the first ten volumes of this, the only modern edition, to appear; at least fifteen more volumes are needed. The copy for my volume of Johnson's political writings was sent in twelve years ago (as was that for the next scheduled volume, his sermons). After eight or nine years in which nothing happened, it was announced that unless the $6,000 subsidy demanded for its production were procured, the edition would be "terminated." By dint of passing the hat, the sum was eventually raised—the list of donors can be found on page viii—and the volume saw light last year. It was then decided that the only way the edition could be continued was by regular appeals to the charity of Johnson scholars. The National Endowment for the Humanities recently provided some funds for editorial expenses, but none for book production. The editors of course receive no royalties. One wonders how many of those who affirm their intense devotion to Johnson, and whose devotion will certainly be increased by Bate's sympathetic account, will push that devotion to the point of helping to make available what he wrote, or—an even sterner test—when it has been made available, actually to read it.

Macaulay's century-and-a-half-old prophecy was shrewd:

> What a singular destiny has been that of this remarkable man! To be more intimately known to posterity than other men are known to their contemporaries! . . . The reputation of those writings which he probably expected to be immortal is every day fading; while those peculiarities of manner and that careless table-talk, the memory of which he probably thought would die with him, are likely to be remembered as long as the English language is spoken in any quarter of the globe.

It is good to note that Bate, like Wain and Krutch, emphatically reminds his readers that Johnson's writings deserve to be remembered—even read. Yet one fears that many will continue to prefer reading about "Johnson the personality," or even about "becoming" Johnson. A harmless occupation, no doubt. But is it much more than the middlebrow equivalent of the bored housewife, as she waits in line at the check stand, con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

templating the cover of *People* and enjoying the titillation of "becoming" Farrah Fawcett-Majors? A singular destiny, indeed.

Seeing in the Dark

EYES, ETC.: A MEMOIR. *By Eleanor Clark. Pantheon. $7.95.*

Reviewed by JOHN P. SISK

This unusual book records Miss Clark's experience of the progressive impairment of vision that characterizes macular degeneration. Although at the time of writing her loss of sight was not total, the affliction was irreversible and beyond treatment. Within limits she could walk, cook, make out objects and persons—even on occasion, with the aid of special lighting, make out a few lines of newsprint. Otherwise she could not read, and therefore had to adjust to a drastically modified environment in which the need to kill time and keep out from underfoot led to terrible adventures. The record begins in early spring with a specialist's diagnosis of her condition and ends at leaf fall the following autumn, during which time it was written on huge drawing pads with Magic Markers.

Obviously enough, the theme here is affliction, but for a writer of Miss Clark's sensibility this can be little more than a beginning point. Whose theme is not affliction? In fact, the literature of affliction has become one of the more available opiates of our time. Miss Clark clearly knows this and dismisses herself from the company of such sufferers: "The Sylvia Plath virus now going around is surely silly, i.e. laughable as Rev. Moon et al. I can't feel either as particularly pathetic, though undoubtedly they are, especially if everybody is seen as victim of outside forces, parents, society and all that, which in fact leaves nothing but pathos everywhere." Pathos everywhere is a proper subject only for those needing that self-indulgent despair which Gerard

JOHN P. SISK, professor of English at Gonzaga University, is the author of *Person and Institution.* His essays and reviews have appeared in *Commentary, Harper's,* and the *Atlantic Monthly.*

What it means to Publish with a Leader

EXPOSITION PRESS, INC.
Standard Bearer of Subsidy Publishing

Exposition Press publishes book manuscripts professionally in an average of four months—half the usual time.

Our special imprints—Exposition University (scholarly), Banner (trade), Lochinvar (Americana), Testament Books (religious)—are reserved for deserving works in their separate fields.

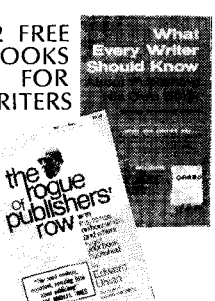
We offer a complete publishing service, including editorial supervision, a dynamic advertising and promotional program and trade distribution.

Inquiries are invited; editorial reports are furnished without obligation.

FREE: Two fact-filled source books presenting a detailed description of our publishing plan, a breakdown of contract terms and typical costs.

COMPLETE AND MAIL TODAY

2 FREE BOOKS FOR WRITERS



EXPOSITION PRESS, INC.
Dept. A5 900 S. Oyster Bay Road
Hicksville, N.Y. 11801 (516) 822-5700

☐ Please send my FREE copies of *The Rogue of Publishers' Row* and *What Every Writer Should Know About Publishing His Own Book* so that I can learn more about the Exposition Press Publishing Plan and get the facts and costs about publishing my book.

☐ I have finished a book; it contains approximately _____ pages (or _____ words).

☐ I have started a book; it will be finished by _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Manley Hopkins calls "carrion comfort."

Carrion comfort is nevertheless the constant menace—formidable almost in proportion as the author knows herself to be advantaged among the afflicted—in the struggle for an attitude that will make the affliction endurable without being at the same time a spiritual defeat. Thus Miss Clark rejects the upbeat consolations (really other kinds of carrion comfort) that "the mental health pros preach." "If I need lies to cheer me, I'll take gloom," she writes fiercely. "Affliction—any loss of faculties or what gave life sense—is abominable; admit it; wail, rail, shake your fist—that's what I call healthy." One of the most moving qualities of this beautifully written book is the mercilessness with which it faces the abominable and unendurable.

Nevertheless, *Eyes, Etc.* does not present its author-sufferer as committed to the pursuit of transcendence through misery, as if she were a variation on Dostoevsky's Underground Man. Important factors—the secure love of husband, children, and friends in particular—are on the side of endurance, and so are the Homeric epics, which were read aloud nightly during the time of her writing. Epics, like old-fashioned lives of the saints, are models of endurance, meant to reverberate beyond their time and place. So Homer reverberates in the world around Miss Clark, orchestrating everything "to enormity, to the very limits of memory and imagination." He supplies a backdrop against which the afflictions of others and the parlousness of the times, to which her own affliction makes her especially sensitive, are seen more clearly.

Also reverberating with Homer is a moose, a legendary animal in a story once told to Miss Clark by her father and employed in her book with great wit and power. The moose is an attraction at a country fair; the charge to see it is a nickel for a single person, a quarter for an entire family. A white-bearded old man whose descendants are strung out behind him to the horizon comes up and asks for a family ticket. The startled owner of the moose lets them all in free, saying, "It's worth more to my moose to see your family than it is for your family to see my moose." What the moose sees, then, as the endless family files through his tent, are the tribulations of mankind, and it is in this capacity, as astounded spectator, that he functions recurrently throughout the book.

The author herself, of course, is an astounded spectator in an experience not only rigorously devoted to seeing more clearly but one in which she really does see many things more clearly than she did when her vision was unclouded. Nevertheless this ancient paradox is not central to her book. In many of her moods it is one of those carrion comforts against which she must wail, rail, and shake her fist. What, then, is central? One might be tempted to repeat what Harold Clurman said a quarter of a century ago about Miss Clark's fine *Rome and a Villa:* "It does not fall conveniently into an easily identifiable pattern." She calls the present book a memoir, which suggests an identifiable pattern of sorts. I suspect, however, that there is irony in her use of a term which, in any event, promises a looser structure than one finds in this memoir.

The most conveniently identifiable pattern of *Eyes, Etc.,* I suggest, is that of elegy—more specifically, given the author's sensitivity to her rural New England environment, pastoral elegy. I am thinking not so much of a point-for-point correspondence with the traditional divisions of this poetic form—invocation of the muse, procession of mourners, digression on contemporary affairs, consolation, and so on—but of theme and attitude. Miss Clark's book, like that greatest of all pastoral elegies, Milton's "Lycidas," is passionately involved with the necessity of coming to terms with the prospect of unexpected and unendurable loss of the creative self—Miss Clark through incipient blindness, and Milton through untimely death (the death by water of the young Edward King being merely the symbolic occasion). The shattering thing for Miss Clark is not being struck down by a proper antagonist—against whom one might be forewarned, for whom one might be prepared, or with whom one might even contend in glory—but by "some sneak affliction from nobody knows where"—Milton's "blind Fury with th' abhorred shears" that "slits the thin-spun life."

This vision of the utter precariousness of our condition we know well enough, and our tendency is to respond to it with the carrion comfort that is peculiar to these times: our pervasive sense of victimization. So elegy is

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not our story; like epic, or like tragedy for that matter, it is too much about endurance. "In these stories of ours," Miss Clark writes, "doom has gone bananas, is lumbering about like a headless monster; there is nothing to make us respect it." Milton makes us respect it; therefore he can end his elegy with "To morrow to fresh Woods, and Pastures new" without sounding sentimental. And it is because Miss Clark has made us respect doom that she can, at the end, find it "impossible to hang on to, or recreate or sympathize with, the rage and grief of months ago"—can even bid her moose good-bye without sounding the slightest bit defeated.

Learning over Lucre

CAUGHT IN THE WEB OF WORDS: JAMES MURRAY AND THE *Oxford English Dictionary*. *By K. M. Elisabeth Murray. Yale University Press. $15.*

Reviewed by WILLIAM HALEY

Forty-four years ago my wife gave me as a birthday present the large *Oxford English Dictionary*. We decided that the thirteen massive volumes should not stand idle on the study shelf like some lexicographical Stonehenge (for spellings one can always go to the "Concise" volume), but should be deliberately brought into constant use. We made it a habit—whenever a word came up in talk or reading which, possibly for no apparent reason, suddenly interested either of us, or our company if we had any—that the appropriate volume of the large *O.E.D.* should be fetched and the word's history read out. We did this even at formal dinner parties. The effect is still pleasantly remembered by at least some of our guests.

In this way we learned that *jeans* came from Genoa (*Gênes*) circa 1495, from which it was easy to surmise that *denims* came from the French town of Nîmes, and *cambric* from Cambrai in Flanders. *Poplin* floored every-

SIR WILLIAM HALEY was director-general of the British Broadcasting Corporation from 1943 to 1952, and editor of *The Times* (London) from 1952 to 1966.

The Victorian Critic and the Idea of History

Carlyle, Arnold, Pater

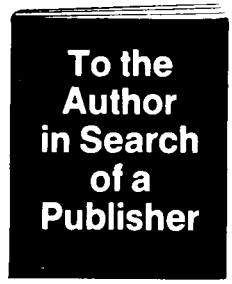
Peter Allan Dale

Peter Allan Dale examines the critical writings of Carlyle, Arnold, and Pater and shows how nineteenth centry historicizing affected Victorian theories about the nature of poetry and art. Everyone interested in Victorian thought, as well as modernists concerned with tracing the roots of twentieth century poetics, will welcome this book. $13.50

Harvard University Press
Cambridge, MA 02138

LOOKING FOR A PUBLISHER?

You are invited to send for a free illustrated guidebook which explains how your book can be published, promoted and marketed. Whether your subject is fiction, non-fiction or poetry, scientific, scholarly, specialized, (even controversial) this handsome 52-page brochure will show you how to arrange for prompt publication.



Unpublished authors, especially, will find this booklet valuable and informative. **For your free copy, write to: VANTAGE PRESS, Inc. Dept. F-71 516 W. 34 St., New York, N.Y. 10001**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

one. The *O.E.D.* revealed that it came from Avignon—until 1791 a city of the popes—the material made there being called *papalina.* We were amused by the long war of attrition between the pedants and the populace over red and black currants in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The original currants came from the Middle East. The people thought our English fruit, both red and black, looked like currants, and called them currants. The experts pointed out they were not of the same genus as the Levantine currants and christened them "beyond sea gooseberries." This was both unhandy and unconvincing. So in course of time a compromise was sought with "bastard currants." The vulgarians would have none of this either. Black and red currants they are called to this day. We have always said of the three great tools of our trade that the *Dictionary of National Biography* has been in most constant use; the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11th–12th edition) has widened our knowledge most; but the large *Oxford English Dictionary* has given us immeasurably the greatest enjoyment.

The world would not have had this masterpiece of exact and entertaining learning without James Murray. It is true, and just, that on the title page of the 1933 reissue James Murray, Henry Bradley, W. A. Craigie, and C. T. Onions share the credit. The three last all played important parts. Yet without James Murray's single-minded scholarship, dogged determination, passionate devotion, and unending sacrifice there would have been no parts to play. This life of him, *Caught in the Web of Words*, written by one of his granddaughters, is perforce a biography of the *O.E.D.* itself. More, a whole strand of the Victorian age is vividly depicted. Scotland, London, Oxford—a small Border-town tailor who walked seventy miles in a day to see the latest fashions in Edinburgh, the ebullient Dr. Frederick James Furnivall, the impetuous but generous Benjamin Jowett, and of course Mr. Gladstone (the more Victoriana that are disclosed, the more we find Mr. Gladstone somewhere and somehow therein)—*Caught in the Web of Words* embraces them all.

James Murray was a true Victorian. He was born nineteen weeks before Victoria came to the throne. He died fourteen years after she died. That would have been of little significance had Murray not been preeminently a man of his time. It was the age of equal opportunity, if you had the gifts and the energy to take it. The son of a journeyman tailor who married a linen manufacturer's daughter, James Murray is said to have "known his letters" when he was eighteen months old, to have copied Greek and Latin words before he was seven, and to have been learning Italian and German as well as Latin and Greek by the age of fourteen.

In that year he left school and got employment in a chemist's shop "to add to his scientific knowledge." Next he was an assistant schoolteacher. At the age of twenty he became head master at the Hawick Academy. Head master was a misnomer; there were no others. Single-handed Murray undertook to teach not only reading, writing, grammar, composition, arithmetic, mathematics, geography, drawing, ancient and modern languages, but also "the leading principles of Moral Science, Political Economy, History, Natural Science, Human Physiology, and the other Branches of Knowledge which must form an important part of every Enlightened System of Education." Not even whole cohorts of teachers attempt as much in our schools today.

Murray was twenty-seven when he moved to London in an endeavor to save the life of his consumptive wife. For by then he was married and had gained a reputation as an artist, a botanist, an archaeologist, and a public speaker. More important for his future, he had taken up philology, and excitedly discovered Anglo-Saxon. He had become a public figure beyond Hawick and the Border. The move to London failed in its purpose. His wife died. He married again. He became "probably the most learned bank clerk in London." He tried to obtain a post in the British Museum and failed. His interests brought him in touch with A. J. Ellis, a mathematical tutor at Cambridge, who, with Henry Sweet, was the original of Bernard Shaw's Professor Higgins. Membership in the Philological Society was Murray's next step. From that all the rest followed. The society decided that England was to have a masterpiece of erudition and Murray a distinguished place in the history of learning.

It has been necessary to dwell on Murray's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

early years in order to make understandable how quickly he assumed eminence in the Philological Society, and how, by the time negotiations with the Oxford University Press began, there seemed no other possible editor for the society's *New English Dictionary*. The Philological Society's dream of such a dictionary was already twenty years old. Murray was forty. He had escaped from the bank and was an overworked master at Mill Hill School on the outskirts of London. In spite of this, Murray undertook the new editorship in his spare time!

Elisabeth Murray has had to write a life of the *Dictionary* as well as of its begetter. The tortuous negotiations as well as the subsequent harassments are detailed and documented. Miss Murray is fair. She shows both sides, although she cannot disguise the intolerable strains that were put on her grandfather during the ensuing thirty-eight years. Part of the trouble lay within Murray himself. No one should complain that he was an uncompromising perfectionist; the *O.E.D.* would have been a lesser thing in the hands of a man who was not. But great as was his stamina, the demands he made of it were beyond reason. He even "enjoyed a certain sense of martyrdom, and did not wish to destroy this image of himself." It was many years before he could be brought to delegate responsibilities. When eventually he did, he treated his coeditor as a schoolmaster would a pupil, even though the man was Henry Bradley. Murray impoverished himself to keep the work going. Gladstone gave him a civil list pension; he spent it on the *Dictionary*. He conscripted his children to cope with the ever multiplying word slips. They could earn pocket money only by sorting them. He had no secretary. He would not let an assistant do any of the correspondence. In addition to his hours of editing, he wrote in his own hand an average of thirty to forty letters a day, writing them a second time if he needed to keep copies. At last schoolmastering was given up; that should have happened long before. He moved to Oxford. The university was churlish. It would not give him a post or an academic home. Eight universities, including Cambridge, had given him honorary degrees before Oxford did so in the year before his death.

NOVELS

by J. Inchardi

$10 each

Lines On The Death Of A Fisherman

Three Jews In A Tub

Dreamship

Yurros

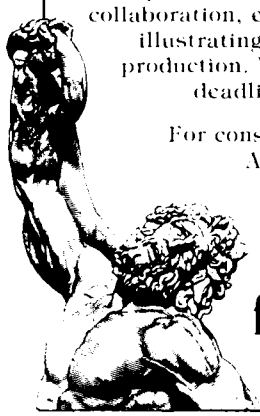
A Paper Toy

Intercurse

Order by mail from
Sirius Books, Box 177
Freeport, Maine 04032

Agonize No More after the research and writing are done!

Give us your precious pile of manuscript pages, photographs, drawings, whatever – technical or otherwise – and we'll make of it a publication that we'll all be proud of. Plain or elaborate, as you need. Knowledgeable collaboration, editing, designing, illustrating, typesetting, production. We know about deadlines, too!



For consultation, call collect
Anthony Drummond
(301) 841-6646
or 261-8338 from
Washington, D.C.

fishergate
Publishing Company, Inc.
2521 Riva Road
Annapolis, Maryland
21401

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It is pleasing to note the generous help he received from Americans. The British treasury refused to provide sets of Record Office publications as possible sources of words for the *Dictionary*. The United States sent theirs unsolicited. He was made a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Two of his most prolific voluntary helpers, Dr. Fitzedward Hall and Dr. W. C. Minor, were Americans. A new generation may not know the extraordinary story of Dr. Minor. When Murray, impressed by his scholarly help, decided to meet him, he found that Minor was in Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum. A surgeon captain in the Army of the North, Minor had become mentally deranged after having had to brand a deserter. In London he shot a man dead under the delusion that the harmless wayfarer was pursuing him. He stayed in Broadmoor for thirty-eight years, until Murray persuaded Winston Churchill, Home Secretary in 1910, to release him and repatriate him to America in custody. Minor provided 5,000 to 8,000 quotations for the first volume alone.

Murray's long battle to make his ideal *O.E.D.* a reality was a war on two fronts. Dr. Furnivall, secretary of the Philological Society, who never really wavered in his faith in Murray, was nevertheless an insensitive man, tactless to the point of brutality. He was also a born troublemaker. In his anxiety lest the university should abandon the project, he was ready to make compromises that Murray would not tolerate. Murray bore much from him because Furnivall was a genuine scholar, but the breaking point came more than once. Although Furnivall would see the red light and backtrack, by then Murray was exhausted from nervous tension. Fortunately the speed of his recuperation was always remarkable.

Murray's years of strife with the Oxford University Press were a more natural development. The problem is still familiar today, and the almost impossible reconciliation of learning and lucre was personalized in the tug-of-war between editor and management. The longer Murray strove to produce the finest possible dictionary on lexicographical lines, the more the Oxford University Press saw first their expected profits disappearing, and then their actual losses mounting. Friction between them was inevitable.

In the midst of the trouble, the redoubtable master of Balliol, Benjamin Jowett, became vice-chancellor of the university and thereby chairman of the University Press Delegates. He was not a man to leave anything untouched, particularly something as unsatisfactory as the University Press considered the progress of the *Dictionary* to be. Jowett proposed that the size of the work be reduced. He put forward printed *Suggestions for Guidance in Preparing Copy for the Press*. Murray's introduction was redrafted.

For Murray this was the last straw. Like Oliver Cromwell before him, he thought of emigrating to America. Earlier he had been approached about a professorship in an American college. "The future of English scholarship," he wrote to his staunch supporter, Henry Hucks Gibbs (later Lord Aldenham), "lies in the United States, where the language is studied with an enthusiasm unknown here, and which will soon leave us far behind." Like Furnivall, Jowett realized he had gone too far. Peace was restored. The two men became close friends.

After Jowett had ceased to be vice-chancellor, the drive for so-called efficiency was taken up by Lyttelton Gell, secretary to the Delegates. He sought to reorganize the project, to introduce bonus schemes, to have a second editor. Bradley was appointed, but it seemed to make little difference. Gradually Murray's persistence won. Oxford not only became reconciled to loss instead of profit; the world's acclaim of the parts of the *Dictionary* as they came out persuaded the university to be proud of its publication. Although still far from completion, the *O.E.D.* had become "not least of the glories of the University of Oxford."

When Murray died on July 26, 1915, the end of the work was still thirteen years away. The *Oxford English Dictionary* is not one whit the less his creation. Miss Murray's splendid book ensures that his memory will march down the years in step with his masterpiece. The frontispiece photograph of him could well represent Plato's "universal" of a scholar. But "Grandfather Dictionary," as his second generation called him, was also a very lovable family man. *Caught in the Web of Words* presents that man also.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Reader Replies

Fear and Trembling at Yale

Kudos to Gerald Graff (Autumn 1977) for his bemused analysis of this most recent distortion of literary study that is ensnaring gullible minds in English departments across the country. It is comforting indeed to have Professor Graff "set upon a golden bough" and, like Yeats's prescient bird, sing of it justly as a passing tyranny. May it pass quickly!

Daphne Merkin
Graduate Student
Columbia University
New York, New York

The Despairing Optimist

In his Autumn 1977 column, René Dubos makes a valid point in defining happiness not as a passive state of bliss, but as the outcome of acts of will commonly involving struggles against hostile circumstances.

His etymological argument is less convincing. Happiness and happening do indeed have the same root, hence implying involvement in some enterprise, as the author puts it. But French *bonheur* and *événement* have no such common bond; in fact, *bon-heur* implies an element of luck, a "good hour," that is, the right time. German *Glück* is used interchangeably for happiness as well as luck.

Are we to deduce that English speakers must strive harder to attain happiness than speakers of other languages? Obviously this was not Dr. Dubos's intention, since he uses cross-cultural examples to substantiate his argument.

Liane Gutman
New York, New York

God and Norman Bloom

Carl Sagan, in "God and Norman Bloom" (Autumn 1977), quotes Sir A. S. Eddington's mystical number as 136. This famous number is 137. It is presumably the reciprocal of the Sommerfeld fine structure constant, and is the only pure (that is, dimensionless) number that can be formed from basic physical constants (the charge of the electron, Planck's constant, and the velocity of light [*in vacuo*], along with twice pi). Most physicists have fun with such numerological games, but few take them seriously.

Burton Rothleder
Silver Spring, Maryland

Professor Sagan replies: Burton Rothleder is mistaken. Eddington's original "mystical number" *was* 136, derived from his "Fundamental Theory." After experimental measurements showed the reciprocal of the fine structure constant to be closer to 137, Eddington revised his analysis and came up with the latter number, again supposedly from first principles. The present best estimate of this number is 137.036 with a small probable error; it is not an integer. Of course, most of us do not take such *ad hoc* theories seriously; the idea of not taking such theories seriously was the point of my article.

Arthur O. Lovejoy

In offering us his recollections of Arthur O. Lovejoy (Summer 1977), Lewis Feuer helps us to recall the quality of the life of a unique and integral spirit. And we can only be grateful to Feuer.

In his account of some of Lovejoy's public encounters with the representatives of competing philosophies of the thirties and forties, Feuer omits mention of what may have been the most dramatic encounter of them all: that between Lovejoy and Alfred North Whitehead. Whereas those of Lovejoy's opponents mentioned by Feuer (for example, the logical positivists) tended to call into question the meaningfulness of the concerns of traditional philosophy, in Whitehead, Lovejoy had an opponent of the opposite stamp—one who would boldly restore the tradition of speculative philosophy and unabashedly seek to reveal the nature of "the really real." In the manner of the pre-Socratic philosophers, Whitehead offered a comprehensive metaphysics that would take account of physics

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and scientific cosmology; it would base itself also upon man's "primitive" awareness of his place in a world external to himself. Most professional philosophers would have said that this kind of endeavor had been put to a decent rest by Immanuel Kant, who would have regarded it as another "vulgar theosophy." However, Whitehead could not be easily dismissed by the logical positivists, for at the beginning of the century, especially in his monumental *Principia Mathematica* (with Bertrand Russell), he had helped to forge some of the logical tools upon which they depended.

So here was the embattled Lovejoy in the middle—upholding the claims of reason and of healthy common sense against the intellectual Left and Right. (In this context the terms may be said to have a political as well as an intellectual reference, although not with any exactitude.)

The encounter with the Right in the person of Whitehead took place some time between 1934 and 1936 under the auspices of the Philosophy Club. Lovejoy was again a visiting professor at Harvard for a year. The scene was the first classroom on the left as one enters the west entrance of Emerson Hall, with room for about fifty seats. The room was filled to the rafters (or the high windowsills), and, as one entered, one penetrated a heavy atmosphere of dramatic tension. The topic was epistemological dualism—or the doctrine that maintained the distinction between idea and object, or between sensum and object. In Lovejoy's *Revolt Against Dualism* (1930), he had challenged the philosophers of his time who thought they had successfully overcome such dualisms, and Whitehead was one of the overcomers. Also, I seem to recall that in the debate Lovejoy was challenging Whitehead's "denial of simple location."

As I came upon the scene, Lovejoy, the man who in 1908 had distinguished thirteen meanings of pragmatism and had challenged the pragmatists to tell him which they were affirming, was finishing a very detailed outline on the blackboard. Each of the big roman numerals was followed by a thesis of Whitehead as formulated by Lovejoy. Under each roman numeral were listed a number of possible meanings of each thesis—A, B, and C. And under each meaning were listed a number of absurd or unacceptable consequences—1, 2, and 3. Lovejoy's severe and rigorous presentation was an exposition of this well-armored outline. I recall my feelings of embarrassment; I could not conceive that Whitehead could possibly offer a reply. To my amazement, the cherubic Whitehead mounted the platform and appeared altogether cheerful. He paid no attention to the outline or to anything that Lovejoy had said. He told an anecdote, and then appealed to the "intuitions" of his audience ("as a mettah of fe-ect, you kneo-o-ow"). Dazzled by the Whiteheadian charm, the audience forgot Lovejoy's arguments. I was in conflict. I was sorry for Lovejoy and thought the whole thing unfair. But I too was charmed, and felt guilty about it.

A few weeks later I ran into Lovejoy by accident in the apartment of logician Henry Sheffer, who had invited me to seek his counsel. Lovejoy dropped in. Neither of these stalwarts was moved to make small (or large) talk for the benefit of a neophyte in philosophy. I broke an awkward silence by remarking upon the coincidence in my meeting Professor Lovejoy, for on that very day I had finished a period of three weeks in which I had done nothing but read his *Revolt Against Dualism*. "Harumph," he harumphed, "I should say it would take more time than that!"

From my recall of some of the conversation that developed at this meeting at Sheffer's, I can perhaps throw some light upon Feuer's report that when he had asked Lovejoy whether he had gone as a student to Paris in order to hear Bergson's lectures, Lovejoy replied in the negative—"he had been studying cannibalism at the time." This cryptic remark makes sense in light of Lovejoy's reaction to my telling him of my design to go to Paris to study with the French anthropologists and sociologists who were purporting to make contact with some of the basic philosophical problems. Lovejoy had once done the same thing, he informed me; he had studied with the teachers of my prospective teachers. His referring to this excursion as "studying cannibalism," in conversation with Feuer, was, I can only guess, his way of expressing his disdain for what the French anthropologists had had to offer him. Another graduate student in philosophy at Harvard made the excursion to Paris with similar purpose and reported on his results, with no disdain, to Josiah Royce's seminar of 1913–1914; his name was Thomas Stearns Eliot.

One may hazard the suggestion that in the company of professional philosophers of the seventies Lovejoy would have felt more at home than he felt in his day. For today he would no longer be confronting the dogmatic characterization of traditional metaphysical problems as "meaningless"; nor would his students be followers of totalistic systems such as Marxism, absolute idealism, and pragmatism. Rather, his students and colleagues would be sharing his effort to deal with traditional problems in piecemeal fashion—depending upon meticulously reasoned argument and the appeal to common sense, and participating in the revival of a decent respect for intellectual history.

Joseph Neyer
Department of Philosophy
Rutgers College
New Brunswick, New Jersey

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Origins of Knowledge and Imagination

Jacob Bronowski

In this eloquent volume Jacob Bronowski, mathematician and scientist, presents a succinct introduction to the state of modern thinking about the role of science in man's intellectual and moral life. Weaving together themes from ethnology, linguistics, philosophy, and physics, he confronts the questions of who we are, what we are, and how we relate to the universe around us. $7.95

Now available in paper

A Glossary of Faulkner's South

Calvin S. Brown
Cloth $12.50 Paper $3.95

Style

An Anti-Textbook
Richard A. Lanham
Cloth $6.95 Paper $3.95

The Supreme Court and the Idea of Progress

Alexander M. Bickel
with a new foreword by Anthony Lewis
Cloth $15.00 Paper $3.95

The Politics of Propaganda

The Office of War Information, 1942–1945

Allan M. Winkler

"Winkler's book is unique. Crisply and in perspective, it reports the background, history, bureaucratic squabbles, frustrations, and modest successes of OWI's efforts to bolster the morale of Americans and our friends and to deflate the fighting spirit of our enemies during World War II."—Leonard Doob
$11.95

Passierschein

(GULTIG FUR EINEN ODER MEHRERE UBERBRINGER)

Der deutsche Soldat, der diesen Passierschein vorzeigt, benutzt ihn als Zeichen seines ehrlichen Willens, sich zu ergeben. Er ist zu entwaffnen. Er muß gut behandelt werden. Er hat Anspruch auf Verpflegung und, wenn nötig, ärztliche Behandlung. Er wird so bald wie möglich aus der Gefahrenzone entfernt.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
Oberbefehlshaber
der Alliierten Streitkräfte

Übersetzung nachstehend. Sie dient als Anweisung an die alliierten Vorposten.

SAUF CONDUIT

Le soldat porteur de ce laissez-passer a sincèrement l'intention de cesser le combat. Il doit être désarmé et correctement traité. Il doit être nourri et recevoir les soins médicaux nécessaires. Il sera éloigné dès que possible de la zone dangereuse.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
Commandant Suprême
des Forces Interalliées

SAFE CONDUCT

The German soldier who carries this safe conduct is using it as a sign of his genuine wish to give himself up. He is to be disarmed, to be well looked after, to receive food and medical attention as required and to be removed from the danger zone as soon as possible.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
Supreme Commander,
Allied Expeditionary Force

Concession to the Improbable

An Unconventional Autobiography

George Gaylord Simpson

When a scientist of George Gaylord Simpson's stature turns to autobiography, his narrative becomes a sourcebook for the history of research in his fields during his lifetime. As entertaining as it is wise and informative, this book is an engaging portrait of an incredibly full and committed life. Illus. $15.00

Yale University Press New Haven and London

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CONTEMPORARY ISSUES.

RACE RELATIONS IN THE URBAN SOUTH 1865-1890
Howard N. Rabinowitz

These comparative case studies of race relations in five cities of the post-bellum South challenge many assumptions about the origins of segregation. "Rabinowitz has taken urban race relations to a significant new frontier of research, description, and analysis."

—Harold Hyman, Rice University

$17.95

ABORTION IN AMERICA
The Origins and Evolution of National Policy
James C. Mohr

"A sound and full picture of the extent of abortion and the attitudes toward it, as well as a careful analysis of how the laws banning abortion in 19th-century America came about....An eye-opener." *—Carl N. Degler, Stanford University*

Illustrated, $12.50

THE REMEMBERED GATE:
Origins of American Feminism
The Woman and the City, 1800-1860
Barbara J. Berg

By analyzing the ways in which 19th-century urbanization changed the social and political consciousness of American women, "this sensitive and original book will permanently transform our ideas about the origins of feminism in America."

—Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

Illustrated, $14.95

THE SLUM AND THE GHETTO
Neighborhood Deterioration and Middle Class Reform, Chicago 1880-1930
Thomas Lee Philpott

"A very well-researched and very valuable contribution to our general knowledge of the relations among immigrants, blacks, and reformers in the North...a fine and sobering book."

—Nathan Glazer

"A major contribution to the study of American urban life."

—Andrew M. Greeley

$17.95

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS 200 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED